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CHRISTIAN IDEAS AND IDEALS

AN OUTLINE OF CHRISTIAN ETHICAL THEORY

BY

R. L. OTTLEY

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LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
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Jesus Christ came into the world to do things which only He could do. He came to make men know things that were not certainly known: He came to make certain the serious care of God for mankind, to make certain His moral character, to make certain immortality and judgment. Further, He came to introduce ideas governing thought and conduct, which He only could introduce, by what He was and what He did—ideas of the moral law deeper and more powerful than any in the world; the idea of sin, of pardon, of restoration; the reality of a new ideal, the Christian character. And more, He came to create a new tie and union among human souls, between them and God, between them and Himself as the Son of man, between themselves, one with another.

R. W. CHURCH.

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PREFACE

This book contains the substance of lectures on 'The Outlines of Christian Ethics' addressed to candidates for the ministry (Chh. I.–XVI.), together with three supplementary chapters on various points of social morality. The subject is one which was frequently commended to our attention by a teacher whose name is inseparably associated with the Chair of Pastoral Theology at Oxford,—the present revered Bishop of Lincoln. But its compass is so large that I have found it advisable to touch only upon topics of primary importance, with the aim of exhibiting the point of view from which Christian thinkers of every period have approached ethical questions, and so illustrating the vital connection that subsists between the moral *ideals* of Christianity and its characteristic *ideas*. The limitations of such a method of treatment will be obvious enough; some problems are mentioned only to be dismissed; but I trust that what I have written may stimulate interest in the study of a great subject, and

may serve in some measure to guide the thought and reading of those who are called to proclaim in a world of change the unchanging 'way of salvation.'

R. L. O.

Whitsuntide, 1909.

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INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER I

THE PROMISE OF LIFE

τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ Θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.—Rom. vi. 23.

'It is the *differentia* of man to know life, to enter into its meaning, to perceive its truth, to appreciate its beauty or nobility, to be doer as well as enjoyer of its good. To know life is the condition of true living it.'—W. P. Du Bose.

The relation of Christian doctrine to Christian life and conversation is comprehensively described in a passage written at a time when it was possible to summarise the experience of at least one generation of believers. *His divine power*, says the author of the Second Epistle of Peter, *hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue.*[1] The passage implies that Christianity is, in its essence, not a mere creed or philosophy, but a life—a life which depends upon the grace and power of God, and consists in spiritual fellowship or union with Him. It implies that man cannot rise to the height of his ideal calling apart from the action of a self-revealing Creator who by the manifestation of His own character 'calls' man to holiness, and who Himself

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[1] 2 Pet. i. 3.

supplies the power needful for attaining to it. This is, in short, the doctrine of the New Testament: that without the redemptive aid of God humanity cannot fulfil its ideal destiny. Man was made for communion with God, and in that communion his real 'life' consists.

Christianity, then, is a life; and *the life*, as St. John tells us, *was* once for all *manifested*.[1] The Incarnation, or manifestation of God in a human life, is the central fact of history; it is the turning-point in man's conception of religion. It justified those dim anticipations of the possibility of a real and vital fellowship between the Deity and His creatures which underlay the rude and purely external rites of primitive worship. It vindicated once for all that haunting sense of an essential affinity between the divine and the human nature which found expression in the earliest speculations of philosophers and in the visions of poets. For the Incarnation was at once a revelation of God and a revelation of Man. As *a revelation of God*, it crowned the progressive religion of the Hebrew race; it met with a satisfying response the Gentile search after God. It manifested God as the supreme Good towards which nature aspires, the true centre round which creation revolves. Further, it revealed God as willing to enter into real and vital fellowship with man by sharing his mortal experience, drawing him with human hands and speaking to him in human tones. And this revelation of Deity was in itself the manifestation of essential goodness, of

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[1] 1 St. John i. 2.

which we can form no higher idea than that it is love—love imparting and sacrificing itself. On the other hand, regarded as *a revelation of Man*, the Incarnation marked an epoch in human thought. It threw a new and unsuspected light on the inherent capacities of human nature, on its destiny and on the conditions of its perfection. In a *character*, a *personality*, were exhibited at once the possibilities of man and the hindrance to their realisation—namely, the mystery of sin; victory over sin was seen once for all to be the law of human perfection. *Christus*, says Lactantius, *viva praesensque lex*. In Christ the true law of human nature is revealed; He is Himself *the new man.* In place of the imaginary ideal of Greek philosophy—Aristotle's moral expert (ὁ σπουδαῖος), Plato's philosopher-king, the Stoic 'wise man,' the detached and self-sufficing intellectualist of Neo-Platonism—Christianity sets forth the pattern of moral perfection in an actual human life. Thus in a unique sense *the life was manifested* in Jesus Christ: human life as it was divinely intended to be—enriched, ennobled, transfigured by an unbroken and abiding fellowship with God. The New Testament accordingly claims for the religion of Jesus Christ that it is *a way*, or rather *the way*, of life;[1] and its Founder points to Himself as *the way, the truth, and the life.*[2] Being in its essence *a life*, our religion assigns a central place to Him who is *the life.*

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[1] Consider Acts ii. 28; ix. 2; xix. 9, 23; xxiv. 22.

[2] St. John xiv. 6.

What, then, is the teaching of the New Testament on the subject of life?

First, we learn that *life* is the characteristic gift of the Gospel. Man yearns instinctively for a larger, fuller life, and this life is realised through union with the incarnate Son. *I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.* God gave unto us eternal life, and *this life is in his Son.*[1] According to the Christian conception of it, 'virtue' displays itself in moral energy. Through the knowledge of God and through fellowship with Him, all the faculties of human nature are heightened and intensified; individuality is strengthened and the whole personality enriched;[2] the capacity for knowing, willing and loving is developed and satisfied to the uttermost. From this point of view Augustine's aphorism is profoundly true, *Summum bonum est summe esse;*[3] and salvation is seen to be 'nothing less than the preservation, restoration, or exaltation of life.'[4] In fact, the chief good for man, as the New Testament conceives it—that which alone corresponds to the creative idea of humanity—is life in fellowship with Deity: *Vita hominis visio Dei.*[5]

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[1] St. John x. 10; 1 St. John v. 11.

[2] See Illingworth, *Christian Character*, p. 182; and Walpole, *Personality and Power*.

[3] *de vera relig.* xviii.

[4] Hort, Hulsean Lectures, *The Way, the Truth, and the Life*, p. 101.

[5] Iren. iv. 20, 7; cp. v. 27, 2: κοινωνία δὲ Θεοῦ ζωὴ καὶ φῶς καὶ ἀπόλαυσις τῶν παρ' αὐτοῦ ἀγαθῶν . . . χωρισμὸς δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ θάνατος.

It follows that life implies continual dependence upon the one and only source of life. It consists in a permanent personal relationship to a personal God. Christian ethics knows nothing of self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) in its literal sense. Human character is at every point indebted to the essential source of good; it attains to its proper perfection only through vital union with God. *He that hath the Son hath life.*[1] Moreover, in this conception of life as derived from God and sustained by communion with Him, is involved the anticipation of immortality. The Old Testament prepares the way for a doctrine of personal immortality by foreshadowing the possibility of a covenant-fellowship with Deity which invests human personality with permanent worth and dignity. The devout Hebrew could commit his soul to Jehovah's keeping in confidence that death was not the extinction of his being. It was inconceivable that the life of faith, of prayer, of dependence should ever come abruptly to an end; the very anticipation of such a life, to which the Jew instinctively felt himself summoned, seemed to be a pledge of an uninterrupted continuity of existence. Now Christians are usually accustomed to think of immortality as a truth of divine revelation. *Life and immortality* were *brought to light through the gospel.*[2] But reason itself is irresistibly impelled to postulate the truth of personal immortality by its intuitions of

[1] 1 St. John v. 11.; cp. Aug. *Conf.* x. 6, 10: 'Deus tuus tibi vitae vita est.'

[2] 2 Tim. i. 10.

the destiny to which man is called. If our nature is actually capable of union with God and of progressive assimilation to Him, the conclusion is inevitable that our destiny can only be realised in eternity. If we are made for blessedness, we are made for an unending eternity of life:[1]

> 'We feel that we are greater than we know.'

On this point we shall have occasion to touch again. Meanwhile we pass to another aspect of life, namely, that it realises itself and finds its appropriate nurture and discipline in fulness of personal relationships. That this statement in a transcendent and archetypal sense is applicable even to the mystery of divine personality, is implied in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Religion itself is in its essence man's fellowship and friendship with a personal God, and the fact that 'mankind is a community, that we all stand in relation to each other, that there is a public end and interest of society which each particular is obliged to promote, is,' as Bishop Butler points out, 'the sum of morals.'[2] In answer to the young ruler, who asks a question *concerning that which is good*, Christ replies, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*,[3] and it is noteworthy that He particularly mentions the duties, not of the first, but of the second table of the decalogue. And in fact, the

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[1] Lact. *div. inst.* iii. 12: 'Si cadit beatitudo, ergo et immortalitas cadit in hominem, quae beata est.'

[2] *Serm.* ix. 8.; cp. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 183; Walpole, *Personality and Power*, ch. iv.

[3] St. Matt. xix. 17.

Christian law embraces all possible relationships in which men stand to each other; while, conversely, social or corporate life is the condition necessary for the complete development of personality. Hence the supremacy assigned by the Gospel to the grace of love, which is *the fulfilling of the law.*[1] We only live as persons in so far as we fulfil the claims which fall on us as members of a community of persons to whom we owe truthfulness, justice, humanity, service and affection. The abundance of life which Christ promises consists in the fulfilment of manifold relationships, in mutual offices of love and interchange of service.[2] It is in view of the fact that morality is essentially *social* that Christ enjoins the renunciation of life. *Whosoever*, He says, *shall lose his life shall preserve it. He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.*[3] The individual only reaches the perfection of which he is capable by merging himself in the life of others; by the surrender of himself to the whole; by the subordination of private and personal interests to those of the community. The individual personality only shares in the larger life in so far as it does not isolate itself or claim independence, but loses itself in self-sacrifice and altruistic effort.[4] By dying to itself, by expansion of interest and by self-communication, personality is enriched and perfected. The isolated life is the barren and truncated life; the life

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[1] Rom. xiii. 10.

[2] Cp. Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 67.

[3] St. Luke xvii. 33; St. John xii. 25.

[4] Cp. J. H. Skrine, *What is Faith?* ch. ii.

that spends itself and is spent for others *beareth much fruit*.

Again, life that is rational, moral and personal, that is, life of the highest type, manifests itself in *character*. It consists even more in what men *are* than in what they do. The opportunities of actual achievement which fall to individuals are few, and even these depend to a greater extent than is generally recognised upon the temper or spirit that pervades the whole community to which they belong. But all men alike tend to become something which either fulfils or contradicts the highest capacities of their nature; and the great aim of Christianity, regarded as a practical system, is the formation of character. The chief function, indeed, of the Christian ministry is to bring men into such living fellowship with God as may enable them to become all that they are capable of being. Further, all economic and social questions, on the right solution of which depends the highest welfare of nations, involve at the root problems of character. Social disorders are ultimately the product of wilful or inevitable poverty of character,[1] and it is according as they bear on character that all social or legislative changes must be judged. What men in all classes of society instinctively seek after is that larger,

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[1] This was clear to the Greek philosophers. It is implied in Plato's conception of the State; it is stated clearly in such a passage as Arist. *Eth. Nic.* ix. 8, 7: 'If all were to vie with one another in the pursuit of τὸ καλόν and were to strive to practise the things that are best in conduct, the public wants of mankind would be satisfied, and each man individually would enjoy the greatest of all possible goods, if it be virtue that is such.'

fuller life which only Christ can bestow. But this larger life does not mean merely greater opportunities of achievement, or greater capacities of enjoyment; it means a richer personality; it means heightened character. 'She was rather anxious to become all that she might be,' it is recorded of a noble woman, 'than to do great things.'

Life, then, is the ideal end of man, the ultimate good, the highest blessing which he is capable of enjoying. But there is a misconception which may be noticed at this point. It finds expression in a well-known observation of Mr. J. S. Mill. 'Christian morality (so-called),' he declares, 'has all the character of a reaction; it is in great part a protest against paganism. Its ideal is negative rather than positive; passive rather than active; innocence rather than nobleness; abstinence from evil rather than energetic pursuit of good; in its precepts . . . "thou shalt not" predominates unduly over "thou shalt."'[1] Mr. Mill to a certain extent guards this general statement by his admission that the ethical teaching of Christ has been only partially and one-sidedly developed by His disciples. But he holds that in any case the purely Christian ideal is defective, and that even in the recorded utterances of the Master 'many essential elements of the highest morality are among the things which are not provided for, nor intended to be provided for.'

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[1] *On Liberty*, ch. ii. (People's edition, p. 29). Mr. Lecky also speaks of the Christian type of character as 'the glorification of the amiable rather than the heroic qualities' (*Hist. of European Morals*, i. 155).

It is to this statement that a thoughtful student of the New Testament will demur. The character which it was Christ's object to develope in humanity was God-likeness. Human perfection was to be modelled on the absolute goodness of God;[1] and whatever elements of strength or beneficence, of persistence or energy, we have learned in Christ's school to associate with the thought of God—these find their appropriate counterpart in humanity. But, as we shall see, the Gospel has occasioned a 'transvaluation of values'; it has taught men to see in longsuffering the display of divinely given power; in patience and meekness the highest exercise of heroic energy. The most essential and characteristic mark of the Christian mind and will is not 'amiability' but *power.*[2]

Finally, it is obvious that life implies capacity for growth, for the assimilation of new experience, for the enlargement of moral and spiritual outlook. It has been truly observed that there is no finality in ethics. Just as our ideas of what is 'natural' are constantly expanded by our growing knowledge of nature, so our notions of what is 'good' in matters of conduct are confirmed, deepened, or perhaps modified by fresh experience. In other words, the Christian ideal is capable of expansion and development; or, to express the same truth otherwise, laws of conduct vary to some extent with changes of time and circumstance. Thus, apart from

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[1] St. Matt. v. 44.

[2] See W. E. Channing's *Discourse at the dedication of Divinity Hall, Cambridge,* 1826, on St. Luke iv. 32.

general rules, the question of what is right in particular cases and situations must be left to Christian tact or perception—a faculty which needs to be continually trained and illuminated by exercise and by submission to the leadings of that higher reason which for Christians is identical with the voice of the Holy Spirit. The mode of the Spirit's action does not at this point concern us; it is enough to remind ourselves that His enlightening work may be carried on either directly in the individual reason, or indirectly through the Church, the moral consciousness of the individual being moulded and guided by that of the community. But in this, as in other matters, the religion of Christ leaves much to the individual himself. The authority of the spiritual society must exercise its legitimate and inevitable pressure; but the ideal towards which the Gospel points is such a condition of mind and conscience as will enable the Christian to decide problems of conduct for himself, relying upon that *unction from the Holy One*[1] which rests upon him in virtue of his union with Christ. The need of constant growth in the faculty of moral perception, the habit of reliance on the guidance of the divine Spirit, is implied in the far-reaching question addressed by Christ to the professed moralists of His day: *Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?*[2]

Thus the conception of life is many-sided, because life (to use a familiar phrase) consists in response, or self-adaptation, to environment. But man's true environment is God—all that God *is*,

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[1] 1 St. John ii. 20.

[2] St. Luke xii. 57.

all that He *gives*. To be *alive unto God*[1] is to recognise His presence, His handiwork, His moral claim in every sphere of duty and activity; to be aware of Him in every transaction and every relationship. The knowledge of God lies at the root of all knowledge; it gives the point of view from which the movement of the universe, the phenomena of nature, the products of human civilisation, are regarded and judged. 'True religion,' says the Cambridge Platonist, 'never finds itself out of the infinite sphere of the Divinity, and wherever it finds beauty, harmony, goodness, love, ingenuity, wisdom, holiness, justice, and the like, it is ready to say, *Here* and *There is God*.'[2] And life in its highest form implies sensitiveness, aptness to respond, to the presence, the voice, the mind that appeals through the things of space and time to the heart of man. Life is aspiration, upward movement, the spirit of prayer; it implies a personal relationship, in which the soul passes upward through the multiplicity of outward things to Him who is the final Rest of the human spirit, the one Object of its knowledge, desire, effort and joy. In a single word, life—perfect life—is love. This is the first and the most elemental of Christian moral ideas. It lies at the very root of those conceptions, both of truth and duty, which are characteristic of the gospel of Christ. It enhances the significance of the noble prayer contained in an ancient liturgy:

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[1] Rom. vi. 11.

[2] John Smith, *Select Discourses*, p. 433 [London, 1660]. Cp. Newman, *The Idea of a University*, disc. 3.

'Thou, O unseen Father, art the fount of life, the fount of light, the fount of all grace and all truth, who drawest all to Thyself through the advent of Thy beloved Son. We beseech Thee, make us living men.' [1]

There is one comprehensive phrase in the New Testament which seems to include all the different aspects of life which have been briefly mentioned above. Jesus Christ speaks of Himself as *the life;* St. Paul describes Him as *our life* (ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν), and the most mystical of the Apostolic Fathers, Ignatius, re-echoes the phrase in various forms: 'Jesus Christ our true life,' 'our inseparable life,' 'our never-failing life.' [2] The real significance of this expression will appear as we proceed. But it is necessary to anticipate so far as to point out that the doctrine of our mystical union with Christ is a fundamental element in the Christian system of ethics. The goal of moral development is a renewed or transformed personality—a personality crowned and consummated by the indwelling presence of Christ. The Christian only realises or 'finds' his true life, only attains to the very truth and ideal of his nature, in so far as Christ is 'formed' in him,[3] and becomes in him the central principle of thought, emotion and will. *To me,* cries the apostle, *to live*

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[1] From the Eucharistic Anaphora of Bp. Sarapion (*c.* 350).

[2] See Lightfoot on Col. iii. 4.

[3] Gal. iv. 19.

is Christ.[1] In Christ a man first becomes fully and actually *himself.* Christ manifested in him is the ultimate and ideal truth of his personality. This topic must not be pursued here. Let it suffice to repeat, by way of summary, that according to the Christian conception, the ultimate good for man is life; that life, both in its lower and its higher sense, comes to him as a communicated gift from God; that it consists in vital fellowship or participation with God, and involves mutual possession or inherence;[2] further, that life manifests itself in personal relationships of love and mutual service; that it is developed by sacrifice and enriched by self-communication; finally, that life implies a growing capacity to discern, to choose, and to fulfil what is ideally *good* in matters of conduct. And all these things are made possible only and always through the indwelling presence in man of *the Word of life* and of the Spirit in whose coming He Himself visits and blesses the soul.

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[1] Phil. i. 21.

[2] 1 St. John iv. 16.

CHAPTER II

CHRISTIAN ETHICS IN RELATION TO OTHER SYSTEMS AND TO PRESENT NEEDS

> 'La vraie religion doit avoir pour marque d'obliger à aimer Dieu. Cela est bien juste ; et cependant aucune autre que la nôtre ne l'a ordonné. Elle doit encore avoir connu la concupiscence de l'homme, et l'impuissance où il est par lui-même d'acquérir la vertu. Elle doit y avoir apporté les remèdes, dont la prière est le principal. Notre religion a fait tout cela ; et nulle autre n'a jamais demandé à Dieu de l'aimer et de le suivre.'—Pascal.

I

There was a stage in the history of the Christian faith when it was commonly regarded as a divine philosophy.[1] This, broadly speaking, was the conception of Christianity that was characteristic of the Greek and of some Latin apologists of the second and third centuries. The names of Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria at once suggest themselves in this connection. Justin, speaking of the Platonists and Stoics, claims that 'whatever has been well expressed in the writings of others belongs to us Christians';[2] and even Tertullian, in spite of

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[1] ἡ καθ' ἡμᾶς φιλοσοφία is a characteristic phrase. See Tatian, *c. Graec.* 32.

[2] *Apol.* ii. 13.

his aversion to human philosophy, approaches this point of view when he speaks of the soul of man as 'naturally Christian.'[1] The apologists were, in fact, deeply concerned, in the interests of religion, to insist on the universality of the Christian faith: its adaptation to the moral and intellectual needs of their age; its correspondence with the rational and spiritual constitution of man. Viewed, however, as a system of ethics, Christianity stands in marked contrast with any system which finds its *data* merely in the region of human experience—which takes the nature or constitution or history of man as its sole field of investigation. The Christian system takes as its point of departure the revelation of God, and the manifestation of man's possibilities, in Jesus Christ. The Christian ethic is, so to speak, theocentric. Its foundation is laid not so much in the study of man's nature, functions and capacities, as in revealed truths respecting the purpose and character of God. It takes into account those spiritual experiences and forces which are familiar to faith, but are apt to be overlooked or even reckoned as abnormal by other systems. Apart, however, from this fundamental point of contrast, Christianity has several points of contact with what may be called non-religious systems of ethics. It accepts and uses the results of moral philosophy and psychology, so far as they throw light upon the fundamental facts of human nature. For ethics can never be treated adequately apart from continual reference to psychological inquiry. Psychology in great measure

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[1] *Apol.* 17.

supplies the necessary *data* for a theory of morals. The phenomena of conversion, for instance; the awakening of the soul in adolescence, and the disturbance in thought and emotion which it involves; the mental habits and religious feelings characteristic of adult life,—all these are facts, primarily psychological, which have a direct bearing on ethical theory, especially such theory as rests on religious presuppositions. We claim, then, for Christianity that as a system of morals it is *inclusive*. In this region, as in others, it claims all ascertained truth as its own. It takes cognisance of all the *data* of consciousness; of all laws of mind or character which previous inquiry has established—for instance, the law of association, the law of habit, the scientific classification of the different springs of action. But it will appear that the leading concepts of morals, 'good,' 'freedom,' 'obligation,' 'virtue,' acquire in Christian ethics a new depth of significance. It may also be contended that Christianity stands in closer contact with the actual facts of the moral life than other systems. Its primary aim is to produce not so much a habit of correct thinking about morality as a certain type of life—the Godward life, the Christ-life.[1] In this connection pre-eminently *the kingdom of God is not in word but in power.*[2]

Christian ethics is, then, inclusive of all the results of independent ethical inquiry. But it also completes what is lacking in other systems, the weakness of which has lain in the fact that their conclusions have generally been based on an

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[1] 1 Pet. iv. 6: ζωὴ κατὰ Θεόν.

[2] 1 Cor. iv. 20.

incomplete survey of the facts. The Christian character, or, in other words, personality at its highest point of moral power and spiritual consciousness, is a phenomenon that challenges investigation and explanation. It is not in any strict sense scientific to limit ethical inquiry to the moral phenomena of *average* human life, and to exclude a survey of the heights attained by a St. John, a St. Paul, an Augustine, a Francis of Assisi, a Vincent de Paul. There is a 'psychology of the saints'[1] which is unintelligible apart from adequate knowledge of the faith that has kindled and ennobled their souls. Nor is it sufficient to take account of instances of what has been called a special 'genius' for goodness. To those who have eyes to see, there are facts of ordinary experience which ethical systems are apt to overlook, or, at least, inadequately explain: the fruit of the Spirit in human life; the transfiguration of character; heroisms of faith and self-sacrifice that take us, as it were, by surprise; the sudden or gradual elevation of average character. *In Christ* (to use St. Paul's favourite phrase) human nature becomes *a new creation*,[2] exhibiting the action of forces which transcend those at work in humanity at large. That these forces are daily transforming individual lives and slowly contributing to the regeneration of society is a fact which is often ignored or denied, but which is familiar enough to those who are entrusted with

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[1] See Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 44. Mr. Granger defines a 'saint' as 'one who displays in a special degree the excellences which characterise the Christian ideal' (p. 20).

[2] 2 Cor. v. 17.

the spiritual oversight of their fellow-men.[1] Consequently, Christian ethics differs from other systems in the standpoint from which it approaches the *data*, and in the relative importance it assigns to the different problems of ethics.

Thus (1) *duty* is regarded in its relation to God. The service of man is comprehended in duty to God. This was the principal lesson which the Hebrews learned from their great lawgiver. The worship of Jehovah was indissolubly and once for all connected with the life of social righteousness; the fear of God was to be the motive and mainspring of moral action in all intercourse of man with his fellows. The same principle pervades the New Testament. Even the simplest obligations of life are sacred because they are fulfilled *unto the Lord and not unto men*;[2] they are to be discharged *heartily* (ἐκ ψυχῆς), with fidelity to an inward ideal of which the unseen Deity alone can take cognisance.[3] Social duty, then, is rendered primarily to God; but this principle does not exclude the possibility of 'religious duties' understood in the narrower sense of duties rendered to God, not as moral Governor of the universe, but as a *Person* standing in immediate relation to all personal

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[1] Cp. Liddon, *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 130 foll.

[2] Col. iii. 23.

[3] Like other characteristic elements of Christian morality, this principle emerges in pre-Christian thought. It is anticipated in the tenth commandment, and even in such a primitive code as that of the Twelve Tables: *e.g.* 'Ad Divos adeunto caste, pietatem adhibento: qui secus faxit Deus ipse vindex erit' (Cic. *de legg.* ii. 8. See Cicero's comment in ii. 10, §§ 24, 25).

beings, and claiming their homage, devotion and love.

(2) The mystery of *sin* largely determines the peculiar characteristics of Christian ethics. Sin is a fact or law of human life which refuses to be ignored or explained away ; it is an initial barrier to moral advance ; and the foremost of moral problems is the conquest of sin, recovery from its effects, and the restoration of human nature to its ideal integrity. The tendency of other systems is to overlook or minimise the fact of sin, to make light of what is a radical taint and defect which prevents or retards moral growth. The doctrine or fact of 'original sin,' with its consequences, will be considered later on. Meanwhile it is enough to remark that the Christian system which holds out to man such exalted hopes takes a very sober view of his actual condition. His destiny can only be fulfilled through sacrifice and renunciation, through a process of dying to the old or false self in order to win the new manhood which is realised only *in Christ.*

(3) It follows that Christian ethics is constrained to recognise and deal with a problem which philosophy is apt to set aside — the problem of the re-creation of character. Philosophical systems do not, as a rule, advance beyond the formulation of moral requirement ; they prescribe what 'ought' ideally to be done or avoided. Christianity, on the other hand, is primarily concerned with the question, 'How am I to do right ?' It regards human nature as standing in need of recovery and renewal. It points to aids and remedies by which character can

be restored and transformed. It undertakes to make the bad good and the good better. It claims to be *a power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.*[1] In his short treatise *On the grace of God*, Cyprian urges this point with force and eloquence; and he appeals to the common experience of his fellow-Christians when he describes the strange transformation wrought by the grace of God in himself and in multitudes whom their former moral impotence had driven to despair. To this testimony multitudes in every age have *set to* their *seal*, and all alike echo the cry of Cyprian, *Dei est, inquam, Dei est omne quod possumus.*[2]

Enough has been said to illustrate some chief peculiarities of the Christian moral system. It stands, as we have seen, in close and vital connection with the revelation of God in Christ. With other systems — those, for instance, of ancient Greece — human nature itself is the standard. 'With the Greek,' it has been justly said, 'man is the measure. To stand well with one's self, to be true to one's own name, or standard, or ideal, is the end.' To Hebrew and Christian ethics 'God is the measure. To be right with God, . . . that is the end.'[3] Thus the chief good, the ultimate end of rational action and moral striving, is for Christianity a *datum* already revealed in the gospel of Christ. The chief good is the *Kingdom of God;* and the history of mankind is no mere process of

[1] Rom. i. 16.

[2] *ad Donat. de gratia*, 4, 5; cp. Just. M. *apol.* i. 14.

[3] Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 104.

blind evolution, but a divine education lifting man gradually into conscious fellowship with his Creator, and training his capacity for recognising and making his own the underlying purpose of the universe.

On the other hand, Christian ethics is based on the belief that the ideal of humanity has been once for all manifested in Jesus Christ. And in this connection we may claim that to Christian influence is largely owing the profounder conception of personality which distinguishes modern as compared with ancient moral systems. The Christian thinker sees in personality not a fixed and unalterable quantity, but a living and growing thing, which finds its completion in a perfect and ideal personality—namely, that of Christ Himself. Man becomes his true self, or finds it, through the indwelling in him of the spirit of Another. He can only say, *I live*, when he is able to add, *no longer I but Christ liveth in me.*[1] Modern psychology has elucidated and emphasised St. Paul's distinction between a lower and a higher self. Christian ethics lays stress on two stages or states of the psychological life ; it finds the real significance of man's moral history in the duality of impulses which contend for his allegiance ; the *law of sin* (the lower sensual impulse) and the *law of the mind* (the higher spiritual impulse) are at variance. Accordingly it is the task of personality to attain to inward unity and harmony. But to Cyprian's question, *Qui possibilis est tanta conversio ?*

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[1] Gal. ii. 20. See this subject exhaustively developed in Moberly, *The Atonement and Personality*, ch. ix. Cp. Inge, *Personal Idealism and Mysticism*, ch. iv.

philosophy gives no satisfying response. The Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit and of the mystical indwelling of Christ in the believer has no real counterpart in other systems.

II

In this book the study of Christian ethics is approached from the standpoint of pastoral theology, which means the application of the revealed truths of religion to the actual and present needs of mankind; or, in other words, theology 'in touch and sympathy with human life.'[1] And naturally enough the teaching of the Christian Church is, like other things, tested by its results and tendencies. Men ask, 'Does it make for righteousness, personal and civic; for social amelioration; for the heightening of efficiency; for the elevation of life?' Accordingly a teacher of religion will be guided by experience to discern the truths which are most apt to build up character under the actual circumstances and conditions of his time. He will remember that 'salvation' means not (what it is sometimes represented to be in popular theology) the process of getting men's souls to a place of safety after death, but a present deliverance from the sin which mars and wrecks human life in this world. Salvation means the recovery of life. To 'save a soul' is to rescue manhood in its entirety from those evils—avarice, sloth, idleness, sensuality, frivolity, doubt, despair—which tend to waste and

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[1] Wilson, *Cambridge Lectures on Pastoral Theology*, p. 8.

paralyse its energies.[1] He who would fain help his fellow-men to rise to the full height of their capacities will make it his foremost aim to be in close and continual contact with present facts—such facts as the prevalent misuse of life, perverted and false ideals, moral impotence. To a great extent these have their root in false theology—for instance, in unworthy notions of God as simply and unconditionally 'benevolent'; in the supposition that a human being finds his perfection in independence; in low views of Christ as exhibiting an impossible pattern of humanity, or as being a mere social reformer; in practical neglect or disparagement of the sacraments; in the widespread notion that the different factors in social organisation—trade, commerce, political activity—lie outside the range and control of the Christian spirit.

It is, then, germane to our purpose to notice some of the main perils that threaten the higher life of the modern world in which the work of Christ's Church has to be carried on.

1. Few will deny that the danger which overshadows every other is that of the gradual decay or weakening of the thought of God, with its inevitable consequence, that practical materialism which is (we are sometimes assured) 'the reigning creed of the day in the English-speaking races.'[2]

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[1] 'The Gospel of Christ is for the whole man. To develope all the physical, mental, and spiritual powers into the full stature of manhood is, or should be, the lowest ideal that the missionary sets before himself in his world-wide crusade for righteousness' (Bp. Tucker, *Eighteen Years in Uganda*, vol. ii. p. 155).

[2] W. S. Lilly, *Right and Wrong*, p. 12.

This temper meets us in different forms. There is the coarse materialism of the industrial class; the more dangerous, because more refined and subtle, materialism of the idle and wealthy. The extent to which this materialism prevails in any one class may no doubt be easily exaggerated; but the testimony of those who know the working classes best is that their 'dull lives and dull policy' are evident tokens of an 'eclipse of faith';[1] while the struggles and sorrows of the helpless poor throw into startling relief the coarse prodigality, pitiless selfishness and practical atheism of unlimited and irresponsible wealth.[2] The prevalence of low ideals is due partly, no doubt, to the decay of religion, which is vaguely supposed to be discredited by the discoveries of historical and physical science; but probably much more to the inconsistencies of a professedly Christian society, and to the atrophy of the spiritual faculty induced by the absorbing pressure of the struggle for existence, or by the passion for comfort and pleasure. It seems, indeed, to be the fact that in all classes faith has been undermined rather 'by new wealth than by new knowledge.' Wealth has opened up new avenues for the self-seeking temper; new possibilities of pleasurable excitement more or less refined. The experience of modern life has given new point to the warning

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[1] See Canon Barnett in *Christianity and the Working Classes*, ed. by Geo. Haw, p. 97.

[2] When all allowance is made for exaggeration and one-sidedness, the picture of modern social life in such books as *The Metropolis* (Upton Sinclair) and *The Relentless City* (E. F. Benson) is appalling.

of the apostle in regard to those 'difficult times' (καιροὶ χαλέποι) in which men become *lovers of themselves, lovers of money, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.*[1] The idolatry of wealth excludes the possibility of unselfish devotion to high ideals, zeal for social service, and that love of God which makes all things possible and all things perfect.

Thus the primary need of the modern world is a revival or recovery of the Christian conception of God, and the foremost aim of the Christian teacher is 'to give vitality to the thought of God in the human mind; to make His presence felt; to make Him a reality, and the most powerful reality, to the soul.'[2] For the prevalence of false ideals means false worship, or, in other words, a habit of mind which owns something else than God as the most powerful and most desirable of things, and so sinks into a worship of idols, absorbing, enslaving, degrading. And just as the thought of God—of His kingdom, His revealed purpose, His will for man—must, when duly realised, act as a restraining and inspiring force in human society, so the social consequences which have flowed from the practical perversion or denial of the Christian doctrine of God have led at least one representative of theoretic Socialism to cry, 'The idea of God must be destroyed: it is the keynote of a perverted system.'[3] To honest thinkers of this type, a community

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[1] 2 Tim. iii. 1.

[2] W. E. Channing, *Discourse on the Christian Ministry.*

[3] Karl Marx, ap. Peabody, *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 16.

organised on a frankly secularistic basis appears preferable to one which in actual fact ignores the belief which it professes to cherish. For faith in God, if it means anything, implies belief in righteousness as the law of human activity in every sphere: belief in the worth and dignity of the individual soul; belief in the sacredness of common life and in the superiority of spiritual to mechanical causes. It means the habitual endeavour to judge of all social movements and efforts in the light of God's revealed will and to get that will done, as in heaven, so on earth. In this faith is rooted all that gives to ethics a transcendental value; all that makes human life other than a vain shadow.[1]

2. Another chief hindrance to worthy moral life is presented by the abnormal social conditions to which modern civilisation has given rise. Salvation means deliverance from all things that mar or hinder the normal development of personality. The task of the Church, therefore, necessarily includes the endeavour to grapple with the material evils which destroy or thwart spiritual and moral growth; such evils as flow from lack of house-room, the decay of home life, intemperance, dishonesty in trade, sweated industries, excessive labour, etc. At the root of most social problems lies some fault of personal character: greed, selfishness, luxury, unrestrained

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[1] In this connection the growing secularisation of Sunday is a grave symptom. Sunday is the one day of the week when there is a real opportunity of giving 'vitality to the thought of God.' If the Sunday goes, 'there is nothing which can ever take its place. This is the test *stantis aut cadentis ecclesiae*' (Prof. P. Gardner in *Anglican Liberalism*, p. 144).

passion, moral thoughtlessness; they can be attacked directly only by the force of organised Christian opinion prompting and guiding legislation, indirectly by the building-up of individual character and by efforts to rescue individual lives from the pressure of perilous or unfavourable surroundings. Christianity aims at the moral transformation first of individuals, and afterwards, through individuals, of human society.

But even this obvious view of the facts is challenged by the advocates of a false method—the method which assumes that in the improvement of social conditions State-agency can take the place of personal and collective moral effort and sacrifice. This is the fundamental fallacy of much popular Socialism: a naïve belief in the possibility of social regeneration by external agencies—what Carlyle calls 'faith in mechanism.' Thus it is plainly asserted that 'the ethics and religion of modern Socialism look for regeneration from without, from material conditions and a higher social life.' 'The nobler life will result from generations of satisfied rather than repressed animal desires.'[1] 'Socialism,' writes another enthusiast,[2] 'restores humanity to its highest level.' There is something tragic in this defiance of the teachings of experience, this confident denial of the truth on which religion rests—that man is, on the one hand, a spiritual being, who cannot find the ultimate satisfaction of his nature in any mere state of material well-being; and, on the

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[1] E. Belfort Bax, *Ethics of Socialism*, pp. 19, 146.

[2] Jaurès.

other, a morally disordered being for whom progress depends upon self-conquest and submission to moral discipline. Only to those whose estimate of human nature is low and shallow will Socialism of this crude type appear to be the panacea for social, that is, for moral, disease. The disorder is in the last analysis *spiritual*, and can be overcome only by the agency of spiritual forces. The true life, personal and social, in which salvation consists can be developed only from within:

> 'It takes a soul
> To move a body,—it takes a high-souled man
> To move the masses . . . and your Fouriers failed
> Because not poets enough to understand
> That life developes from within.'[1]

Every social question is ultimately a problem of character, and therefore of religion. It concerns primarily not what is lowest, but what is highest in human nature:

> 'Men who work can only work for men,
> And, not to work in vain, must comprehend
> Humanity and so work humanly,
> And raise men's bodies still by raising souls
> As God did first.'[2]

3. There is a third characteristic feature of

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[1] E. Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, viii. 430 foll.

[2] *Aurora Leigh*, ix. 849 foll. Cp. L. T. Hobhouse, *Democracy and Reaction*, ch. iv.: 'It has been the misfortune of our time that attention has been diverted from this ethical, or if the expression be preferred spiritual, order in which the essentials of progress lie to the biological conditions which affect man only as the human animal.'

modern civilised life which stands in close connection with what has already been mentioned. In spite of the admittedly socialistic tendency of recent legislation, there is at the present time a disquieting recrudescence of individualism. 'This reveals itself,' writes Bishop Westcott, 'in social life by the pursuit of personal pleasure; in commercial life by the admission of the principle of unlimited competition; in our theories of life by the acceptance of material standards of prosperity and progress.'[1] Theoretically, indeed, we have advanced beyond this point. The old political economy was based on the supposed analogy between the cosmic process and the development of human society; its characteristic doctrines were those of *laissez faire*, self-assertion, unlimited competition, freedom from restriction both in the acquisition and in the employment of wealth.[2] Recent economists have, as a rule, traversed this tendency. They have emphasised the limitation of personal rights by the claims of the community. Their method of inquiry leads them to supersede abstract economic theories by a study of the actual conditions under which human beings live, work, and either acquire wealth or contribute to its accumulation. They regard all mercantile and industrial transactions as personal and moral, rather than exclusively 'economic.' From this

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[1] *Social Aspects of Christianity*, p. 138.

[2] Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics* (Romanes Lecture), p. 34. 'The fanatical individualism of our time attempts to apply the analogy of cosmic nature to society,' etc.

point of view society is not a mob of competing units, but a community of persons linked each to other by ties of brotherhood, and laying each other under mutual obligations. Economic problems, in fact, involve problems of personal character; and conversely each individual needs the moral discipline involved in membership of a community. Corporate life is the great agency for the training and testing of manhood.

It is obvious that this conception of the mutual relations of men in the modern state corresponds to a deeper and more scientific conception of personality than that which underlay the older political economy.[1] At the present time, however, we seem to be confronted by a practical denial of the principles which have recently changed the tone and drift of economic speculation. Individualism, or, as it has been called, 'atomistic' selfishness, is threatening the best interests of civilisation. It tends in particular to undermine the security of such fundamental institutions as those of marriage and family life. It is apt to ignore all the moral questions involved in the acquisition, use, and distribution of wealth. It resents the claim of the State to regulate the traditional 'rights' of property. The personal interests of the individual are supposed to outweigh the claims of the community. There

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[1] On this point see Inge, *Personal Idealism and Mysticism*, ch. iv. He points out that the conception of personality as a quantity, 'rigid,' 'impervious,' 'impenetrable' (ultimately due to Kant), 'destroys the basis on which Christian love is supported' (p. 110).

is, in fact, a widespread confusion of thought in regard to the meaning of 'liberty.' 'Freedom' is popularly understood to mean an unrestrained licence to do what one pleases with one's own. And, as usual, confusion of thought leads ultimately to deterioration of motive and character. The sense of social responsibility fades away. The consistent individualist is content to use the toil and service of others without adequate return, and without any feeling for their needs and claims. Where this temper is prevalent, there are ominous signs of the revival of the characteristic vices of heathendom. The reckless pursuit of wealth or pleasure, for example, tends to foster that implacable and pitiless temper, *without natural affection*, which was the mark of average pre-Christian society.[1]

It is no part of our plan to trace in further detail the practical consequences of the prevalent individualism. They meet us at every fresh attempt on the part of the State or of individuals to deal with crying social anomalies. Some person or class is usually interested in maintaining the *status quo.* It is enough for present purposes to have indicated the social conditions or the private prejudices which make a revival of Christian ethical teaching timely and expedient. For what has been pointed out in these pages amounts to this, that the spiritual basis of life has been shaken, namely, faith in a righteous God and in a divine purpose for humanity. And this weakening of moral conditions,

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[1] Rom. i. 31 : *ἀσυνθέτους, ἀστόργους, ἀνελεήμονας.*

while of course it is due to prevalent unsettlement in the region of religious belief, is obviously most disastrous in its personal and social consequences. For the practical materialism of our day is, in part, the consequence of a narrow and unspiritual theory of life, derived from a misreading of the teachings of natural science; in part, the outcome of a purely thoughtless spirit of self-assertion, fostered by the deadening pressure of a secure and comfortable civilisation. In direct antagonism to the customary maxims, or perverted ideals, which unduly control the social life of our time, stand the characteristic ideas of Christianity.

These ideas have to be proclaimed afresh, openly and persistently, to each generation: the idea of *life* as a spiritual gift and a spiritual opportunity; the idea of *freedom* as enfranchisement from all that hinders personality from the service of God and of mankind; the idea of *virtue* as rightly directed desire; and of ethical *good* as the expression of a living will and mind. At the same time, each generation needs to be continually reminded that Christianity is the religion of the *better hope*:[1] the religion that continually opens to man a fresh possibility of attaining, or at least approximating, to the ideal which his conscience accepts. The faith of Christ alone can touch with power the springs of character; can cleanse what is defiled and renew what is decayed; can strengthen

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[1] Heb. vii. 19. See Dr. A. B. Bruce on this passage ('the dogmatic centre of the Epistle'), *The Ep. to the Hebrews* (T. and T. Clark), p. 271.

weakness and kindle the fire of love; can prove itself, in a word, to be indeed *the power of God unto salvation.*[1] For Christ alone has met the fundamental need of struggling humanity—the need of power.

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[1] Rom. i. 16.

PART I

PRESUPPOSITIONS THEOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL

CHAPTER III

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF GOD

αὕτη ἄτρεπτος καὶ ἀσάλευτος ἀρχὴ καὶ κρηπὶς ζωῆς, ἐπιστήμη Θεοῦ.—CLEM. ALEXANDRINUS.

IN this and the following chapters we shall consider some theological presuppositions of the Christian ethical system. An absolute morality implies the existence of a divine will and personality behind it; the idea of good cannot be dissociated from the idea of God. Accordingly we find that the development of ethical ideas among the Jews proceeded *pari passu* with a progressive revelation of the divine nature. The traditional theophany at Sinai was the starting-point of a higher morality. The delivery of the law was a declaration (1) that the divine character is fundamentally and invariably righteous; (2) that the divine requirement for man included social righteousness. The connection between religion and the moral life was thus proclaimed to be essential and indissoluble. Through the prophets, who were the spiritual successors of Moses, a more profound disclosure of Jehovah's character was conveyed to Israel. The prophets particularly emphasised the union in God of holiness and loving-kindness. They proclaimed His

necessary hostility to moral evil, His absolute self-consistency, His steadfast tenacity of purpose, His power to vindicate His character by intervention in human history, His perpetual relationship as Creator, Judge, and King to the nations of the world. Strictly speaking, the doctrine of the prophets was not new; they were not the creators either of monotheism or of the higher moral standard which it implied; the germ of their teaching was already present in the Mosaic theology and ethics. But the prophets did elucidate and emphasise what was obscure or merely implicit in the Sinaitic revelation. The God in whom they believed was at once the Holy One of Israel and the righteous Judge of the world. But the most deep-seated attribute of the divine character was loving-kindness, and herein lay Israel's one hope that its ideal vocation to be *a righteous nation, a kingdom of priests*, would ultimately be fulfilled. Herein, too, lay hope for the heathen world; the Gentiles also would finally be brought to acknowledge, whether in gratitude or in fear, the God of Israel, and would thus become subjects of His world-wide kingdom. To this teaching virtually nothing was added in later times except perhaps (1) a deeper consciousness of the personal relation subsisting between Jehovah and the individual soul—in other words, the idea of a particular providence and a particular judgment; (2) a broader philosophy of history, which attempted to trace the unfolding of the divine purpose in the rise, progress and fall of empires and nations; (3) a more comprehensive view of the divine

'wisdom' as manifesting itself in nature, in revelation, and in the thoughts and inventions of men. The latest message, however, of Hebrew prophecy was the reiteration and expansion of the doctrine of Jehovah's loving-kindness. The book of Jonah crowns the 'universalism' of earlier prophecy by proclaiming the creative pity of Jehovah as the hope and refuge not of one favoured nation but of mankind at large.

This summary sketch of the Old Testament teaching may serve as an introduction to a brief survey of the Christian doctrine of God, regarded as the basis of an ethical system.

The New Testament writers do not attempt to proclaim abstract doctrines; they invite men to enter into living fellowship with a Person who appeals primarily not to man's reason, but to his filial instincts. The fact that *we are his offspring* is the groundwork and basis of true conceptions of His nature.[1] Through that which is highest in man we are enabled to discern something of the nature and character of God. The following, then, are the cardinal points in the Christian doctrine of God.

The New Testament lays all possible stress on the fact of the divine *personality*. God is a personal being, and personality includes reason, love and will. In this point Christianity reinforces the doctrine implied in the anthropomorphic language of the Old Testament, which contains no trace of metaphysical or abstract conceptions of Deity:

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[1] Consider St. Paul's argument in Acts xvii. 29.

nothing that corresponds to the vague τὸ θεῖον of the Greeks. The Jehovah whom Israel feared and worshipped was a living Person possessed of will, purpose and character; and anthropomorphic language was the only possible mode of expressing in terms intelligible to the Hebrew mind the idea of God as a spiritual Being, possessing all the positive attributes of personality, only in a superhuman and transcendent degree.[1] This truth of theology is the connecting link between religion and ethics. Moral life consists in personal relationship to a personal God for whom morality implies a rational end towards which action is directed, an ideal which is the goal and the standard of conduct for all spiritual beings. The tendency of heathen thought was to describe God in terms neuter and abstract rather than personal and moral. 'To the Greek the one God was the last deduction of thought and its supreme object. The reason that reached Him defined Him; He was interpreted in its terms, clothed in its attributes, but did not transcend its categories, *i.e.* He remained abstract, logical, impersonal.'[2] The Arian controversy marked the re-appearance of a similar tendency in Christian thought, a tendency against which Athanasius vehemently protests.[3] God is a

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[1] See an admirable passage in Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, bk. iii. ch. i. § 5.

[2] See Fairbairn, *Christ in Modern Theology*, p. 405. The writer is deprecating the tendency in metaphysics towards the 'de-ethicisation' of Deity.

[3] See reff. in *The Doctrine of the Incarnation*, p. 359.

Father; in other words, He stands in close personal relations to man who is made in His image; He is not bare power, nor is He subject to any 'necessity' other than that imposed by His own essential perfectness. In short, while heathen ethics spoke of the ideal of morality and the goal of human effort in impersonal and neuter terms (τὸ ἀγαθόν, τὸ καλόν), Christ, in answer to a question 'concerning the good' replies, εἷς ὁ ἀγαθός, implying that goodness in the ethical sense can only be an attribute of personality.[1] In the God of Christian worship the moral ideal is alive, and reigns upon the throne of the universe.[2]

Personality, in fact, belongs to the spiritual order—to the sphere which includes the primary *data* of ethics: self-consciousness, will, freedom, love. *God*, according to Christ's teaching, *is spirit.*[3] He is the centre of that realm or order of existence which at once includes and transcends the material order. And as the fact of the divine personality lies behind and inspires the persistent witness of the Church that the spiritual is the ultimate interpretation of the natural order; so the apprehension of this fact has been the secret of all progress in civilisation, the light of reason in its search after truth, the substance of that faith which has

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[1] St. Matt. xix. 17.

[2] Cp. Dale, *The Atonement*, p. 372. 'His relation to the law is not a relation of subjection, but of identity. Hence *He cannot be tempted of evil.* In God the law is alive; it reigns on His throne, sways His sceptre, is crowned with His glory.'

[3] St. John iv. 34.

overcome the world.[1] It may be added that human personality is a mystery, the analysis of which has irresistibly suggested to Christian thought the existence of personal relationships within the Godhead.

But this line of inquiry lies outside the scope of our present subject. It is enough to remind ourselves that the highest good, the infinitely worthy, towards which the human heart aspires, can subsist only in and for a personality perfect in freedom, goodness and power. In a word, God alone is the living, personal *good*.[2]

We may next ask, what is implied in the Christian doctrine of the divine *holiness? God is light, and in him is no darkness at all*.[3] Here, again, we instinctively seek the guidance of history. In the Old Testament we find the word 'holiness' originally used in the sense of 'separateness' from the creature, 'transcendence'; and it is only by gradual stages that the term acquires a distinctly ethical significance. There was evidently little or no clear distinction in early times between the notions of physical and moral evil. Things or persons were 'holy' in so far as they were separated from common use and dedicated to sacred purposes.

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[1] Cp. Illingworth, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 149. 'This sense of Divine personality, little understood, but profoundly felt, has been the dominant factor in the spiritual development of Christendom. It has affected . . . the national histories no less than the individual lives of all those who have hitherto proved themselves the progressive races of the world.'

[2] St. Mark x. 18.

[3] 1 St. John i. 5.

In primitive religion the epithet 'holy,' as applied to Deity, may even have been redundant—a mere designation practically identical with the notion of being divine.[1] The New Testament writers, with a far more profound sense of what is involved in holiness, practically endorse this view; they identify goodness with God. The good exists only in Him. According to the striking phrase of an old Platonist writer, God is 'the fulness of good, or good the fulness of God.'[2]

It follows from this that the idea of ethical good is not the mere result of the unassisted strivings of reason; still less is it the product of the accumulated social traditions of mankind. The idea of good in its absolute sense is *communicated* to man *in divers portions and in divers manners*, in proportion to his capacity of comprehending and responding to it. 'The belief in God,' it has been said, 'is the logical presupposition of an "objective" or absolute morality.'[3] Morality is the revelation of an ideal eternally existing in the divine mind. *He hath showed thee, O man, what is good*,[4] in natural providence, in prophecy, in human history, in conscience; and this process of communication culminates in the indwelling presence of the divine Spirit, whose

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[1] See Kautzsch in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, vol. v. p. 682 *b*. Cp. Dan. iv. 9, 18.

[2] ὁ Θεὸς [πλήρωμά ἐστι] τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, ἢ τὸ ἀγαθὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ (Merc. Trismegistus, ap. Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* i. xi. 3).

[3] Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, vol. ii. p. 212. Cp. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, §§ 192, 286; and Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, vol. ii. pp. 120 foll.

[4] Mic. vi. 8.

office it is to guide, to enlighten, to sanctify, to impart to man a progressive knowledge both of his relation to God and of the spiritual perfection for which he is destined. Holiness, in short, can only be thought of as perfect and complete when it is self-communicating. God manifests His goodness both in enlightening and in enabling His creatures; so that ultimately the human righteousness which God accepts is His own gift, δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ—a righteousness going forth from God and realising itself in individual men and in the order of society.

Speaking historically, the apprehension of moral law by mankind has corresponded to its progressive apprehension of the nature of God. Along with the idea of the unity and absoluteness of God, heathendom lost the conception of an absolute moral law. The *gods many and lords many* of the Gentile world were for the most part embodiments of human passions and qualities. Their very names implied that they were serviceable to merely human aims and even to the fulfilment of merely animal functions.[1] Heathenism had 'as many gods as it had goods,' and those goods were mainly material and secular, implying the superiority of nature to spirit.[2] To the Hebrew, on the other hand, with his haunting sense of spiritual realities, the notions of 'life' and 'good' were bound up with the idea of God as He had revealed Himself to Israel; while the Christian view is summed up in the statement that there is no true life nor perfect good apart from God.

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[1] See Aug. *de civ. Dei*, iv. 8, 11; vii. *passim*.

[2] Dorner, *System of Christian Ethics*, § 35 *a*.

Adherence to Him is the only blessedness, for He is *bonum omnis boni; ipsum bonum.*[1] The moral ideal is what God is—one, spiritual, eternal. And when 'holiness' is regarded as a gift imparted to man by Him who is its source; when, in other words, we think of God as necessarily communicating Himself to His creatures, we practically confess the truth expressed in the crowning statement of the gospel, *God is love;* a statement which is, in fact, the verdict of spiritual experience, when it surveys the teaching, the ministry, the death and the victory of Jesus Christ. Christ came into the world as the 'apostle' of God, to win mankind to a belief in the Fatherly good-will and loving-kindness of God.[2] Because God is love He has an unchangeable purpose of good for the world. He ever wills, as the noblest of heathen thinkers clearly discerned, the happiness and perfection of His creatures;[3] and the love which moved Him to create impelled Him also to redeem. He revealed little by little the full height and breadth of His moral requirement; but also He *devised means* whereby man might be enabled to fulfil the law of righteousness.

Two things in particular seem to follow from the belief that God is essentially love.

We have already noticed that in the Christian conception of life as union with, and dependence

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[1] Aug. *de Trin.* viii. 4; cp. *de mor. eccl.* 13 and 18.

[2] Heb. iii. 1. Cp. Tyrrell, *Lex Orandi*, p. 156.

[3] Cp. Plato, *Tim.* xxix. E—teaching which reappears in the Greek Fathers, *e.g.* Athan. *de Incarn.* 3; Greg. Nyss. *orat. catech.* 5. See also Iren. iii. 21.

upon, God is implied the truth of personal immortality.[1] The truth finds further justification in that view of the universe which regards it as the work of a loving Being. The only rational account that can be given of the existing order of things is that it is not—it cannot be—final and permanent; it is only a preparatory stage in the history of the universe. This *present evil world*, as St. Paul calls it,[2] can only be a sphere of moral discipline designed to educate spiritual beings for a state of existence in which righteousness and happiness shall coincide; in which moral progress shall no longer be thwarted by inevitable failures, imperfections and limitations, no longer darkened by inexplicable anomalies and enigmas. We cannot, in fact, give an intelligible account of the universe if the doctrine that *God is love* be untrue. *If* He is love—*because* He is love—there is ground for the assurance that His purpose for man extends beyond the brief limits of earthly life; that in another sphere character is to be developed, ripened, and brought to the perfection of which it is capable. Thus the doctrine of immortality is entirely consistent with the highest conception that we can form of God's character and methods of action. The perfection to which He purposes to bring humanity consists in a likeness to Himself which requires eternity for its manifestation. *Gloria enim hominis Deus*, says Irenaeus; *operationis vero Dei et omnis sapientiae eius et virtutis receptaculum homo.*[3] Such language would seem

[1] See p. 7.

[2] Gal. i. 4.

[3] Iren. iii. 20, § 2.

overstrained were it not merely an expansion of the ideal destiny foreshadowed by St. Paul in the prayer that his converts *may be filled unto all the fulness of God.*[1]

On the other hand, if God be in His inmost essence *love*, it is intelligible that He should have adapted Himself to the actual situation in which man was placed ; that the gospel of creation should find its fulfilment and counterpart in the gospel of redemption ; that the purpose which was interrupted or hindered by the intervention of sin should be carried to a victorious consummation. The fact of the Incarnation is not only a disclosure of divine love, but its natural outcome and consequence. It falls in with all those 'reverent conceptions of Deity'[2] which human reason and conscience had already entertained. The love which aims at making all things perfect makes all things possible. That man might become what he is capable of being—the child and imitator of God—God, in the person of His Son, was willing to become Man and to do and bear all that is written of Him in the gospels. 'Love,' it has been said, 'is the living bond between the ideal and the real.'[3] God is love ; therefore He transcends the universe and is the immanent source of its life and movement. God is love ; therefore He stoops from His throne and

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[1] Eph. iii. 19. See the exposition of this passage in J. Armitage Robinson, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, pp. 87 foll.

[2] Greg. Nyss. *orat. catech.* 19 takes as his starting-point τὰς εὐσεβεῖς περὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑπολήψεις.

[3] Dorner, *Christian Ethics*, p. 74.

sacrifices Himself on behalf of His creatures. The ascription to God of personality in its fullest and most transcendent sense implies His unfettered freedom to intervene in the order of nature when the fulfilment of His moral purpose demands exceptional action. Thus miracle, rightly understood, is no mere violation of the natural order but a manifestation of free and rational purpose ; it is the revelation of a character, a mind and will, which is not limited by what we call the 'uniformity' of nature, but directs it with sovereign control in the interests of a moral and spiritual order.

The main points in the New Testament doctrine of God have now been briefly considered. A word only is needed to bring out clearly the significance of the doctrine for ethics.

Belief in God as a righteous and loving Person lies at the root of character. The only true righteousness for man is what St. Paul calls *the righteousness of God* in one aspect ; in another, *the righteousness which is of faith ;*[1] in other words, a goodness, the Source and Giver of which is God, and the appropriation of which by man depends on belief in the loving-kindness of God, and in His willingness to bestow what He requires and commands. The God of Christian ethics is one whose will is to save men by aiding them to fulfil the law of their being. Thus revelation has given new impulse to the spiritual ascent of humanity. God has manifested Himself in such a way as to touch the springs of character. He is the one object which faith, hope and love

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[1] Rom. i. 17 ; x. 6.

alike embrace, and where these are present, moral growth and movement are assured. The power that indwells and sustains the universe is love; and being love, in the spiritual as in the natural sphere, He draws all things towards Himself: *κινεῖ ὡς ἐρώμενον.*[1]

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[1] Arist. *Metaph.* xi. (xii.) 7.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF HUMAN NATURE

> 'Il faut, pour faire qu'une religion soit vraie, qu'elle ait connu notre nature; car la vraie nature de l'homme, son vrai bien, la vraie vertu et la vraie religion, sont choses dont la connaissance est inséparable.'—PASCAL.

IN the aphorism which has been chosen as a motto for this chapter, Pascal rightly argues that the truth of religion will be established in proportion as it displays a real knowledge of human nature. Christianity does justice both to man's ineradicable instinct that he is destined for fellowship with God, and to his sense of unworthiness and incapacity. Scripture, while it speaks loftily of man's destiny, takes a uniformly sober view of his actual condition. It describes him as 'lost,' 'weak,' 'sick,' 'blind,' 'dead in trespasses and sins'; it speaks of his natural condition in terms which surely comprise the very sum of helpless misery: *having no hope and without God in the world.*[1] And language of this type not only finds an echo in the universal heart of humanity; it closely corresponds to the declared object of the Redeemer's mission. He claims to be a physician of the sick, a seeker of the

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[1] Eph. ii. 12.

lost, a saviour of sinners. While He invariably treats human nature with reverence, He deals with it as needing health and help. He acts and speaks as one who knows what is in man[1] and who understands his need. Christianity, in short, profoundly corresponds to the complex problem presented by the actual condition of the human race. Alone among religious systems it offers an answer to the question in which Pascal sums up the contrarieties involved in the existing state of human nature: 'If man was not made for God, how is it that he can only be happy in God? And if he is made for God, how is he so opposite to God?'[2]

Now, for the purpose of ethics, any rational account of human nature must begin with the consideration that man stands in conscious relation to law. The law for humanity is conformity to the character of God; in other words, unending progress towards moral perfection.[3] In part this law is naturally discerned: reason, *the candle of the Lord*[4] in man, is the faculty which gives light and guidance in matters of good and evil. It was the condemnation of the Gentile world that it was unfaithful to this light and refused to follow its guidance.[5] Those few who did obey its direction were *a law unto themselves;* they showed *the work of the law written in their hearts*, at least in its

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[1] St. John ii. 25.

[2] *Pensées*, p$^{\text{tie}}$ ii. art. i. § 4.

[3] This is clearly stated by Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* bk. i. chh. v. foll.

[4] Prov. xx. 27.

[5] Rom. i. 18 foll.; see also ii. 15.

broad outlines. And the perfect congruity of the supernatural law, when it was fully revealed in Christ, was at once recognised by the unsophisticated conscience, by the *anima naturaliter Christiana.* The law of revelation (if it may be so called) did not in fact contradict the law of nature; it presupposed and established it; it illuminated and purified the faculty of reason which had overheard in the promptings of the law of nature the voice of God Himself.[1] Revelation, in fact, emphasises the *personal* character of the relationship in which man finds himself standing. It teaches man that his ideal attitude to God is that, not of a servant, but of a reconciled and accepted son; that the perfection of his nature consists in likeness to his Creator; that blessedness means the life of communion with God; and that man's relation to his fellows is that of fraternal love and service. In the religion of the gospel, the idea of conformity to an unwritten and abstract law is 'replaced by that of fulfilling a personal relation,'[2] imitating a living pattern, abiding in fellowship with a living Master and Friend.

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[1] Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* i. 14, § 5. Cp. Aug. *de spir. et litt.* xlvii.: 'Proinde naturaliter homines quae legis sunt faciunt: qui enim hoc non faciunt, vitio suo non faciunt. Quo vitio lex Dei est deleta de cordibus: ac per hoc, vitio sanato, cum illic scribitur, fiunt quae legis sunt naturaliter; non quod per naturam negata sit gratia, sed potius per gratiam reparata natura.' Lactantius, *div. inst.* vi. 8, quotes a fragment from the *Respublica* of Cicero, bk. iii., which is so pertinent that I have printed it separately at the end of this chapter (p. 75).

[2] Westcott, *The Ep. to the Hebrews*, p. 263.

In what way, then, does man's moral constitution bring him into relation to law?

We cannot lay too much stress on the fact that man shares with God the possession of personality, with its three constituent elements: thought, love, will. This it is that makes him spiritually akin to God, and makes him subject to moral law. Personality has been rightly called the 'culminating fact' of the universe;[1] and religious ethics are wholly concerned with its right development. Each man's appointed task, indeed, is to *realise* his own personality, to make it the simple and dominating centre of all his vital and spiritual functions. He has to overcome the discordant elements which hinder this process, and to attain to that inward unity of being, that co-ordination of the life of reason and sense, which results from the domination of a single element—the rational and self-determining will. The Gospel has its own way of describing the realisation of personality. It speaks of the 'soul' (the self-conscious spiritual *ego*) as capable of being 'acquired' or 'lost.'[2] The value of the 'soul' in this highest sense is first emphasised by Christ's teaching. We at once recall such aphorisms as 'How much is a man better than a sheep?' 'The sabbath was made for man.' As *persons*, we have the power of breaking loose and

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[1] Cp. Cic. *de legg.* i. 7: 'Est igitur, quoniam nihil est ratione melius, eaque et in homine et in Deo, prima homini cum Deo rationis societas. Inter quos autem ratio, inter eosdem etiam recta ratio communis est. Quae cum sit lex, lege quoque consociati homines cum diis putandi sumus.'

[2] St. Luke xxi. 19.

standing apart from the animal life in which the soul is more or less involved; the impulses of sense can be controlled by the spirit; and by such free control of the lower nature, by such acts of self-determination, personality grows in richness and strength. In short, the emancipation of self from its entangling environment is the moral problem set before man from the first. To *lose himself*[1] is the supreme disaster that can befall him; his true self is his *better and abiding possession*;[2] his task is to be, in a sense, the maker of himself.

There are two attributes or functions of personality of which the New Testament gives a characteristic account.

I

The moral faculty or 'conscience' is best regarded not as a separate element in human nature, but as an aspect or function of *reason*[3]—what may be called the *practical* as distinct from the *speculative* reason, *i.e.* reason reflecting upon and judging the various springs of action, and so distinguishing a 'better' from a 'worse' in affairs of conduct. But it must be borne in mind that this action of reason is only 'a particular aspect of the single

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[1] St. Luke ix. 25.

[2] Heb. x. 34.

[3] Cp. Locke's definition, *Essay*, bk. i. ch. iii. § 8: 'Conscience is nothing else but our own opinion or judgment of the moral rectitude or pravity of our own actions.' Martineau's definition of συνείδησις, 'knowledge with one's self of the better and the worse,' is suggestive (*Types of Ethical Theory*, ii. 53).

self which is thought and feeling and will.'[1] In the formation of moral judgments reason is not the only factor at work, for they are necessarily *personal* judgments. In other words, the exercise of reason carries with it that of feeling and will; while conversely the state of the will reacts upon the moral judgment. Our power to discern what is right in a particular emergency largely depends upon the habits or tendencies of will and character which have been already formed. Beyond this point analysis cannot go with any satisfactory result. The facts seem sufficiently to show that the judgment of conscience, approving or disapproving motives and actions, is primarily a process of critical perception, but that it does not exclude some simultaneous feeling or sensation of pleasure or pain akin to that which accompanies the exercise of the æsthetic sense.[2] Conscience, then, is a faculty of moral perception or judgment, and it needs, like other intellectual faculties, to be cultivated and developed. It may be metaphorically described as the eye of the soul, which needs to be trained and purified.[3] Hence the New Testament writers refrain from

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[1] Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, vol. i. p. 176. Cp. D. O. Kirn, *Grundr. der Theol. Ethik*, § 18: 'Seiner psychologischen Natur nach ist das Gewissen kein besonderes Organ sondern eine Tätigkeit unseres gesamten geistigen Wesens und zwar zunächst eine Regung des Gefühls, welches sich weiterhin zum sittlichen Antreib und sittlichen Urteil gestaltet.'

[2] The term 'moral sense,' so often employed, seems to be misleading, though admittedly certain facts of feeling form a part of the *data* on which conscience pronounces judgment. See this point elaborated by Rashdall, i. 146 foll.

[3] St. Matt. vi. 22.

speaking of conscience as an unerring or perfect organ. St. Paul, for example, dwells on the necessity of growing in spiritual *knowledge and perception.*[1] Conscience may be confused, 'defiled,' or impaired by unfaithfulness to its direction.[2] Thus it happened that the Gentiles *became darkened* in their understanding; they lost the power of moral perception, and were given over to *a reprobate mind.*[3] Conscience, in fact, is at first a rudimentary faculty, which needs to be constantly corrected and educated, healed and invigorated,[4] and this is in one aspect the supreme task of life. *Tota opera nostra in hac vita,* writes Augustine, *est sanare oculum cordis unde videtur Deus.*[5] As life advances the judgments of conscience may come to be modified or corrected by the knowledge that comes with growing experience; the perception of a particular form of conduct as *good* may yield to experience that suggests something better. Indeed, a 'scrupulous' conscience occasionally means an *imperfectly informed conscience.* No moral judgments can be final till the knowledge on which they are based is complete;[6] and there is a multitude of subjects in regard to which enlarged knowledge of the *data*

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[1] Phil. i. 9.

[2] 1 Tim. iv. 2; Tit. i. 15, where συνείδησις is coupled with νοῦς.

[3] Rom. i. 21, 28.

[4] This is implied in such passages as 1 Cor. viii. 7 foll.; x. 25 foll. On the idea of συνείδησις, see Westcott, *Ep. to the Hebrews,* p. 293 (additional note on Heb. ix. 9).

[5] *Serm.* xviii. *de verb. Dom. sec. Matt.* c. 30.

[6] Cp. Rashdall, *op. cit.* i. 96.

might alter our moral judgment. We are apt to forget the difficulty and complexity in which many moral problems are involved when once their connection with large *social* questions is clearly apprehended.

It will have been noticed that the question of the *origin* of conscience has been omitted. This is not of primary importance for ethics, which is mainly concerned with the capacities and functions of conscience *in its developed state*.[1] The first principle of evolution is that the beginning is to be interpreted by the end; the process by the result to which it tends. It is obvious that the tendency of modern physiological accounts of conscience is to undermine its authority and to pave the way for a doctrine of complete moral irresponsibility[2]—the doctrine which regards virtue and vice as morally indifferent 'products' dependent upon antecedents and environment. This view of conscience, in fact, connects itself logically with a purely deterministic account of the will. Christianity, on the contrary, is irrevocably

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[1] Rashdall (i. 20) points out the importance of distinguishing 'questions of psychological *fact* from questions of psychological origin.'

[2] Cp. Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics* (Romanes Lecture), p. 31: 'Cosmic evolution may teach us how the good and the evil tendencies of man may have come about; but in itself, it is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil, than we had before.' As to the view of Mr. H. Spencer and others, tracing the faculty of moral intuition to 'experiences of utility,' which have produced corresponding nervous modifications, etc., see the criticism in Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, pt. ii. bk. ii. ch. ii.; cp. W. S. Lilly, *Right and Wrong*, chh. ii., iii.

committed to a spiritual conception of the universe; it can make no terms with any system which tends to 'depersonalise' man.

This, however, is by the way; the point is that no account of the *origin* of conscience invalidates the authority of its judgments. The question is, what are the existing facts of human consciousness?—what conscience *is* and what the nature of its present testimony? And this suggests the further inquiry whether the function of conscience extends beyond that of pronouncing judgments of value on matters of conduct. It has been argued with great force, and consistently (as it seems) with the teaching of the New Testament, that conscience bears witness not only to a better and worse in human action, but to the existence of a 'higher than myself,' a *Person* to whom I am spiritually akin, and who has rights over me—the right of control and of command.[1] On this view, conscience is, in actual fact, what Wordsworth calls it—

> 'God's most intimate presence in the soul.'

It is 'the communion of God's life and guiding love entering and abiding with an apprehensive capacity in myself.' It is the indwelling *light that lighteneth every man;* and the progressive education of conscience is an element in that gradual unfolding of the Christ-life within us which will engage our attention later. In its clearer perception of moral law conscience becomes more and more aware of

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[1] Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, ii. 104 foll. See also *The Seat of Authority*, ch. ii.; and Flint, *Theism*, lect. vii.

the existence and character of Him whose will the law represents. The heathen, in their unfaithfulness to the law written in their hearts, were really rejecting *that which may be known of God* Himself; they were refusing to *have God in their knowledge.*[1] Not, of course, that conscience is the sole organ of religious knowledge. The self-revelation of God is addressed not to one faculty only, but to the whole complex nature of man. But it may be claimed that conscience, in a special sense, makes us aware of God; that it brings the soul, as it were, directly into His presence. This, at least, seems to be implied in the facts (1) that the word συνείδησις is qualified by Θεοῦ in two passages;[2] (2) that the exercise of conscience is mentioned in close connection with a *pure heart*, to which is promised the vision of God, and with *faith unfeigned.*[3] The emotions roused by an uneasy or guilty conscience are 'correlative with persons.' They imply the existence of One who has creative power over us; they testify at once to His righteousness and to His retributive justice. Hence the unique authoritativeness of the verdict of conscience—a point on which

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[1] Rom. i. 19, 28. Cp. Athan. *c. Gentes*, 3–11, a passage which developes at length the same thought, that unfaithfulness to conscience involves the loss of the knowledge of God.

[2] συνείδησις Θεοῦ, Acts xxiii. 1; 1 St. Pet. ii. 19. We should perhaps hesitate to interpret συνείδησις as a 'co-knowledge with God' (Martensen, *Christian Dogmatics*, § 5); but in the phrase συν. Θεοῦ it is implied that the act of moral judgment is the inward realisation of God's presence and relation to the soul. See Bigg on 1 St. Pet. *loc. cit.*

[3] 1 Tim. i. 5. Cp. Heb. xi. 6.

Bishop Butler writes with well-known emphasis in the preface to his *Sermons.*[1]

Closely connected with the doctrine of conscience is the question of *moral obligation:* Why must I do right? The answer seems to be that the claim of moral good on man's will is connected with the *personal relationship* in which he stands to God. In the Old Testament we find the injunction to Israel, *Be ye holy, for I am holy.*[2] In the New Testament this reappears in a new form; it is raised, so to speak, to a higher level of authority by a reference to the revealed relationship subsisting between God and man. *Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*[3] As children of God, men are bound to fulfil the law and to accept the responsibilities of their true nature. 'Your obligation to obey this law' (the law recognised by conscience) 'is its being the law of your nature. That your conscience approves of and attests to such a course of action, is itself alone an obligation.'[4] Man, in other words, owes to God the persistent endeavour to realise his ideal. Thus the notion of 'duty' becomes transfigured by its association with religion. Obligation implies a link between *persons.* The moral law presents itself as the appeal of a righteous and loving Father to those who are made in His image—an appeal to them to embrace and

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[1] See Newman, *Grammar of Assent,* chh. v. § 1; x. § 1; *Univ. Sermons,* No. 2; Butler's *Sermons* [ed. Bernard], Pref. §§ 24, 25; *Serm.* ii. § 3.

[2] Lev. xi. 44; xix. 2; xx. 7, 26.

[3] St. Matt. v. 48; see also 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

[4] Butler, *Serm.* iii. § 5; cp. Martineau, *Types, etc.* ii. 120.

fulfil His will, and in so doing to realise their own highest good. A powerful emotion, in fact, is enlisted on the side of the infirm and struggling human will; a feeling of reverence and love for One who is in a supreme degree worthy of the best that man can offer; who is *Good*, not with this or that kind of goodness, but simply good without measure or qualification. εἷς ὁ ἀγαθός.[1] The ground of obligation, then, is God's will for the perfection of His creatures, His fatherly desire that they shall be like Himself, and, accordingly, St. Paul implies in such a passage as Rom. ii. 18, that when a man knows the *will* of God, he knows his duty.[2] For the divine will is not capricious or arbitrary or capable (as some Scotists imagined) of reversing accepted moral distinctions; it is the actual reflection of God's personality, which is essentially loving and righteous. There is nothing 'servile' in the Christian's feeling of obligation; even the perfectly filial spirit of Christ is conscious of a certain *constraint* which can scarcely be distinguished from the feeling of obligation; but the constraint is that of love—the love of goodness embodied in the personality of God. Thus we find Christ saying, *I must be in my Father's house; I must preach; I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; other sheep I have . . . them also I must*

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[1] Rashdall, *op. cit.* i. 29: 'It is not easy to exaggerate the increase of emotional intensity which the moral law acquires when the reverence for it fuses inextricably with a feeling of reverence for a Person who is conceived of as essentially and perfectly Good.'

[2] καυχᾶσαι ἐν Θεῷ καὶ γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα.

bring.[1] 'Obligation,' in short, is a term which by its very form and original meaning connotes a personal relationship; it is a link or tie uniting *persons.*

The question naturally arises whether obligation, being founded on man's personal relationship to God, is in any sense absolute and unconditional; whether it is independent of variations in the specific demands of the law. Goodness consists in correspondence to the divine will, and speaking generally the degree of clearness with which a man apprehends that will is the measure of his obligation. 'We needs must love the highest when we see it,' and do the best when we know it. God's claim upon us is coextensive with what He has revealed to us of His will and purpose for us. The 'best' may, in one case, be the sacrifice of all that a man possesses or values most; in another, it may be patient acceptance of an existing burden, faithful discharge of an imposed or inherited trust. It is unnecessary here to pursue the solemn inquiry, What of those who have already fallen short of an acknowledged ideal, and thereby have lowered for themselves the standard of possible attainment; have 'contracted the boundary to which God had left a nobler sweep'?[2] It is enough to recall the significant utterance of Christ: *When ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do;*[3] a saying which seems to

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[1] St. Luke ii. 49; iv. 43; St. John ix. 4; x. 16.

[2] Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, ii. 120.

[3] St. Luke xvii. 10.

exclude the idea of 'supererogatory works'; and certainly tends to neutralise the distinction between 'precepts' and those 'counsels of perfection' by following which a man may attain to his true end 'better and more expeditiously,' as Aquinas expresses it.[1] According to this latter view, part of the moral law is to be regarded as *imperative*, part as merely *advisory*. A man (so it seems to be implied) can do *more* than his duty. We here touch a subject of long-standing controversy between Roman Catholic and Protestant writers on ethics. It may be admitted that both positions—that which maintains and that which denies the possibility of *opera supererogatoria*—err by a certain one-sidedness. It may be that the Romanist takes too narrow and literalistic a view of what is involved in the 'imitation' of Christ;[2] he may also overlook to some extent the variety of possible vocations. For men attain to their own individual standard of perfection, and thus fulfil the true social service of which they are ideally capable, by discharging the duties of their

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[1] *Summa*, i. ii.^{ae}, 108, 4 resp.: 'Consilia oportet esse de illis per quae melius et expeditius potest homo consequi finem praedictum.'

[2] Harnack, *The Expansion of Christianity*, i. p. 107 note [E.T.]: 'In the early Church the imitation of Christ never became a formal principle of ethics, except for the *virtuoso* in religion, the ecclesiastic, the teacher, the ascetic, or the martyr; it played quite a subordinate part in the ethical teaching of the Church. . . . Those who made the attempt were always classed as Christians of a higher order . . . so that the Catholic theory of "evangelic counsels" has quite a primitive root.' See also the discussion in Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, ii. pp. 130 foll.

calling and by using to the full their peculiar talents. *Each man hath his own gift from God, one after this manner and another after that;* and the highest duty of each is to act resolutely in accordance with what he believes to be his God-given vocation. To follow the 'counsels of perfection' might, in certain cases easily conceivable, be a betrayal of obvious and elementary duty. On the other hand, the denial of the possibility of *opera supererogatoria* is only defensible if ample scope be allowed for heroisms of faith, for exceptional acts of devotion; if *love* be allowed free course, and be recognised as the law of perfection for *every* individual, whatever his vocation. But there is a 'wisdom of love' which ought to control the right use of freedom; a love which takes due account of differences both of opportunity and of individuality. To *love*, the interests of the kingdom of God will be supreme; but the *duty* of each individual is relative to his circumstances, and of these he alone can be the judge.[1] There seems, indeed, to be something artificial in the idea of the 'counsels.' Those who uphold it do not seem to allow for the fact that total renunciation (*e.g.* of wealth or of the married state) may, in some cases, be far less heroic than loyal acceptance and mastery of the actual conditions of life. They are apt to assume that practical Christianity, at least in its highest form, consists in imitation of the external conditions of the life of Christ, rather than in the manifestation, under the varying conditions of each generation,

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[1] Cp. Dorner, *System of Chr. Ethics*, § 21.

of a certain temper or *spirit*—what the Apostle calls the *mind of Christ.* The ideal spirit in which vocation is to be universally fulfilled is that of loyal and generous sonship.[1] The more diligently he fosters in himself this habit of mind, the more ready will each individual be to make ventures of faith and to sacrifice a lower for a higher form of good. Instead of acquiescing in a *minimum* standard of morality—an acquiescence which has, as a matter of historical fact, tended towards the growth of 'probabilism' in influential quarters of the Catholic world—the Christian Church will continually uphold for *all* the highest possible standard of social duty. It will endeavour to form in its members *the mind of Christ*, so that the humblest kinds of service, equally with the highest acts of devotion, may be consecrated by the motive that inspires them. In any case, it will happen that *many that are first shall be last, and the last first.* Love, whether manifested in absolute renunciation of all earthly goods for Christ's sake, or in meek acceptance of the conditions and fulfilment of the tasks which fall to the common lot of mankind, is equally *the fulfilling of the law.*

II

Another attribute of personality next claims attention, namely, the power of self-determination,

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[1] Cp. Aug. *de spir. et litt.* lvi.: 'Huc ergo transeant qui sub lege sunt, ut a servis filii fiant; nec sic tamen ut servi esse desistant, sed ut tanquam filii Domino et Patri *liberaliter* serviant.'

or, as it is loosely called, 'free-will.' The problem now to be approached has its metaphysical as well as its moral aspects; but here we are only concerned with the question, What is the meaning which in Christian ethics attaches to the phrase, 'freedom of will'?

It is manifest that moral law can only appeal to us as beings endowed in some sense with freedom of choice. The *cognitio judicii* which belongs to conscience unquestionably implies *optio eligendi.*[1] The 'common-sense' view of the question is favoured partly by the individual consciousness, partly by the social consciousness embodied in language, law, literature, civic life and religion. But since every act of moral choice both presupposes a previous condition of human personality, and gives rise to a new condition, we recognise that 'personality' is not a fixed quantity, but is continually growing as the result of fresh acts of will. Here is to be found the key to this perplexing problem of freedom,—in the conception of personality, not as fixed, but as *tending towards fixity* of character; not as complete *ab initio*, but as ministering continually to its own enrichment and development, or, on the other hand, weakening its capacity for choosing the better of two moral alternatives.

For the purpose of Christian ethics we may

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[1] Bern. *in Cant.* lxxxi. 6. So in *de grat. et lib. arb.* ii. 4, he points out that man is at once 'ipse liber sui propter voluntatem, ipse iudex sui propter rationem; et merito libertatem comitatur iudicium quoniam quidem quod liberum sui est, profecto ubi peccat ibi se iudicat.'

distinguish between a formal or lower, and a real or higher sense of the term 'free-will.'

(*a*) In the formal sense will is 'free' inasmuch as, given certain possible courses of action between which a choice has to be made, there is a power inherent in the *personality itself* to fix upon some one of the conflicting motives and to choose it as the one which shall determine conduct. To assume that every action is fully and unalterably determined by the existing condition of the acting subject is the mistake of what is called 'determinism.' To imagine, on the other hand, that the will can originate acts *unconnected* with the previous condition of the self, is a one-sided form of indeterminism.[1] Any accurate conception of freedom must somehow manage to reconcile these two extreme positions. And it will appear, on the whole, that while the different possibilities of action are in great measure limited by the existing condition of the personality, or (to express it otherwise) by the actual motives present to the will, there remains in the acting subject a residuary power of *fixing its own relation* to the possibilities; a power of selecting some one of the motives as decisive. This selective process may be appropriately called 'self-determinism,' since it implies that the willing subject is a *spiritual self*, and can therefore be acted

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[1] Kirn, *Grundr. der Theol. Ethik*, § 10, puts this clearly: 'Der Indeterminismus . . . versichert die Handlung sei als solche etwas schöpferisch Neues, frei gewolltes, sie habe ihren zureichenden Grund nicht im gegebenen Zustand, sondern fliesse aus der willkürlichen Entscheidung der Persönlichkeit.'

upon by motives which are not necessarily determined by the past. Volition is a rational and spiritual, not a merely mechanical phenomenon; and while 'in mechanics the present is determined by the past, in the region of human action it is in a sense the future which determines the present.'[1] The precise answer to the question, how, in any particular juncture of circumstances, the willing self will act? must depend upon the balance of all the elements in personality; upon movements in the spiritual region which lie outside the range of mechanical causation, and which accordingly defy calculation or analysis.

Thus the problem, like so many others, *exit in mysterium*. There are depths in personality which make it a mystery even to ourselves, and how much more to others?

> 'Not e'en the tenderest heart, and next our own,
> Knows half the reason why we smile or sigh.
>
> . . . . .
>
> And well it is for us our God should feel
> Alone our secret throbbings.'[2]

We may, then, look on our actions as *free* in the sense that they are, within limits, self-determined.

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[1] Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, ii. 327. Bern. *de grat. et lib. arb.* ii. 3: 'Voluntas est motus rationalis, et sensui praesidens et appetitui. Habet sane, quocunque se volverit, semper rationem comitem . . . non quod semper ex ratione sed nunquam sine ratione moveatur, ita ut multa faciat per ipsam contra ipsam . . . Est vere ratio data voluntati ut instruat illam, non destruat.'

[2] J. Keble, *The Christian Year* (Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity).

Every moral action is in one aspect the product and continuation of earlier actions in so far as they have made the self what it is. In another aspect, each action is a new product, at once revealing the present condition of the self and contributing something to its further development. Accordingly, the agent is justly held accountable by the common-sense of the community, both for particular actions and for the bent of character which he has contributed to form. It must nevertheless be borne in mind that the power of personality inevitably varies at different stages and moments of life. Its force is heightened and intensified by steadiness of thought, by persistency of effort, by the impulse of some strong emotion or affection. And the ideal condition of personality is that in which it is continually advancing *from strength to strength*, and becoming daily more full of vitality, more resolute in purpose, more free from the tyranny of circumstance. Thus the formal freedom of moral choice finds its consummation in the real and actual freedom of the good will. Freedom is therefore, like personality itself, 'a possession and a task'; the starting-point and the goal of moral development.

(*b*) What, then, is freedom in the true sense?

True liberty can only mean the emancipation of the entire self from all that hinders the realisation of its highest possibilities. Christ speaks of freedom as a thing to be acquired through submission to truth; *Ye shall know the truth*, He says, *and the truth shall make you free.*[1] And just as conscience

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[1] St. John viii. 32. There are one or two remarkable parallels

needs educating and enlightening, so will needs strengthening and liberating. Augustine pertinently asks 'why unhappy people venture to boast of their freedom of choice before they are set free?'[1] We are born with only an 'inchoate capacity' of free-will. Our freedom is limited by the force of heredity, by the pressure of circumstances, by some permanent or temporary weakness of personality. In its final state of development, freedom can mean nothing lower or less than the capacity of perfectly responding to the will of God.[2] The *glorious liberty of the children of God* means freedom from sin. 'Will,' says Augustine, 'is then truly free when it is not in bondage to sin.'[3]

Freedom, then, in the Christian sense is a thing to be acquired, and it is only attainable by man in virtue of a divine act of redemption. *If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*[4] In other words, it is a work or process of grace, effected by the power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ. *Where*

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in the Epistles of Seneca: *e.g. Ep.* lxxxviii. 11: 'Unum studium vere liberale est quod liberum facit;' *Ep.* viii.: 'Hoc ipsum philosophiae servire libertas est.'

[1] *de spir. et litt.* lii.

[2] Cp. Aug. *de Trin.* xiii. 10: 'Libertas,—quae quidem nulla vera est nisi beatorum et legi aeternae adhaerentium.' Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo?* i. 12: 'Libertas non est nisi ad id quod expedit aut quod decet.'

[3] *de civ. Dei*, xiv. 11. Cp. xxii. 30: 'Primum liberum arbitrium quod homini datum est quando primum creatus est rectus, potuit non peccare, sed potuit et peccare: hoc autem novissimum eo potentius erit quo peccare non poterit.' Other references are given in Cunningham, *St. Austin*, pp. 93, 94.

[4] St. John viii. 36.

the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty[1]—liberty, not merely of the will, but of the entire personality. The presence of the Spirit in man is, as St. James calls it, *the law of liberty.*[2] He emancipates the reason from moral error, the affections from servile constraint, the will from the tyranny of sinful habit. And that a man possesses this freedom, 'just in proportion, not to his independence, but to his dependence,'[3] we learn from the example of Him who exhibits the ideal of human personality. In Him we see the will of man, unfettered by the slightest inward inclination to evil, responding with unswerving fidelity to the will of God. The royal freedom of the true Son of Man is manifested in the perfection of His obedience to the leading of the Spirit. We learn that freedom is only realised by man in proportion as he identifies himself with the righteous will that rules the universe. Revolt against law, emancipation from law, is not freedom. In a statement which at first sight appears paradoxical, St. James boldly asserts that freedom is the actual consummation and fulfilment of law. The Gospel, or 'word of truth,' is *νόμος τέλειος τῆς ἐλευθερίας.*[4] Similarly St. Paul appears to traverse his customary antithesis of 'law' and 'spirit' when he declares that *The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of*

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[1] 2 Cor. iii. 17.

[2] St. James i. 25. Cp. Liddon, *Univ. Serm.* vol. i. p. 84.

[3] R. C. Moberly, *The Atonement and Personality*, ch. ix. p. 227. Cp. Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 19.

[4] St. James i. 25.

sin and death.[1] The Christian, in proportion to the measure of his progress in grace, tends towards that state of being in which—

> 'Law, life, joy, impulse, are one thing.'

He becomes, 'under the sole rule of God most free.'[2]

Enough has now been said to elucidate the Christian conception of free-will. It is perhaps worth while to point out, in conclusion, how central a place is assigned in Christ's view of man's moral nature to the *will.* In ethics 'the will is simply the man';[3] and in His dealings with men Christ's appeal is made, not primarily to reason or emotion, but to the will. 'Follow me'; 'Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor'; 'Go, and do thou likewise.' This 'religious view of the will' is characteristic of the Gospels.[4] For Christianity is a *life*, the great feature of which is the putting forth of energy. Character grows by successive acts, and moral indecision is fatal to excellence. 'No man can serve two masters'; 'He that is not with me is against me.'

Our Lord accordingly invites men to make an unshrinking venture of faith, to enter resolutely on the path of obedience, as the one essential condition of growth, not only in character, but in spiritual insight and love. This is implied in two of His

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[1] Rom. viii. 2.

[2] Aug. *de mor. eccl.* xxi.: '[Deo] solo dominante liberrimus.'

[3] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 179.

[4] Gardner, *Historic View of the N. T.*, p. 87; cp. Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, aph. xliii. c. §§ 2 and 8; J. R. Illingworth *Reason and Revelation*, pp. 79, 81.

most characteristic utterances. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.*[1] For the commandment of Christ is summed up in the law of love, and love grows by acts of love. Thus the actual life of goodness begins with the self-consecration of the will, and this is the truth which is implied, as we shall see, in the notion of 'justification by faith.' In the first step, the whole process of spiritual growth is implicitly represented; and God accepts man as he is in order to perfect in him what he has already begun to be.

NOTE.

Cicero on the Law of Nature.

The following passage from Cicero's *de Republica*, lib. iii., is preserved by Lactantius, *div. inst.* vi. 8:—

'Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio, naturae congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quae vocet ad officium iubendo, vetando a fraude deterreat, quae tamen neque probos frustra iubet, aut vetat, nec improbos iubendo aut vetando movet. Huic legi nec obrogari fas est, neque derogari ex hac aliquid licet, neque tota abrogari potest. Nec vero aut per senatum aut per populum solvi hac lege possumus. Neque est quaerendus explanator, aut interpres eius alius: nec erit alia lex Romae, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes, et omni tempore, una lex et sempiterna et immortalis continebit; unusque erit communis quasi magister et imperator omnium Deus ille, legis huius inventor, disceptator, lator: cui qui non parebit, ipse se fugiet, ac naturam hominis aspernabitur, atque hoc ipso luet maximas poenas, etiamsi cetera supplicia quae putantur, effugerit.'

This passage brings out forcibly (1) the universality of the Law of Nature. (2) Its testimony to a divine Lawgiver. (3) Its correspondence with the true nature of man.

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[1] St. John vii. 17; xiv. 21.

CHAPTER V

THE NEED OF HUMANITY

'In novissimis temporibus in amicitiam restituit nos Dominus per suam incarnationem, mediator Dei et hominum factus . . . et nostram inobedientiam per suam obedientiam consolatus.'—IRENAEUS.

THE moral truths of Christianity stand rooted in the fact that man's nature needs redemption. Christ came as a Deliverer from sin. It is true that, according to the synoptic tradition, He says very little about *sin* and still less about its origin.[1] But the reality of its existence is implied, not only in the call to repentance and conversion with which He inaugurated His ministry, but also in the teaching which traces the various forms of moral disorder to their source in the *heart* or *will*, and which insists on the need of mortification of desire: *Cut it off, and cast it from thee.*[2]

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What, then, is the Christian view of man's present condition? The answer is that his original

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[1] ἁμαρτία (sing.) does not occur except in St. Matt. xii. 31. On the other hand, ἁμαρτίαι occurs frequently; ἁμάρτημα once (St. Mark iii. 29).

[2] See St. Mark i. 15; vii. 20 foll.; St. Matt. v. 30.

state was not what it is now. Man was not created 'perfect' in the sense that he had reached his complete development; but 'upright' in the sense that he started on the direct line towards moral perfection. He was intended to develope upwards, and the law or principle that should have guided and conditioned his progress was that of communion and fellowship with his Creator. The relation of the 'first Adam' to God was ideally what it ought to have been at the initial stage of his career. No one now attributes to the progenitors of mankind perfection either of sanctity or of knowledge. This would imply confusion of the conceptions of innocence and sanctity. Spiritual perfection was the goal, and not the starting-point, of human development. But the upward movement of the race has been retarded, interrupted, and turned aside from its proper course by an intruding and alien element. In the language of theology, there has been a 'fall,' and the path of moral progress is a way of restoration and recovery. The advance of man toward his ideal is fitful and disturbed—an advance in which the possibility of deterioration or relapse is a real factor. His capacity of responding to the true law of his nature, though not destroyed, is impaired. His faculties of reason and will are weakened; his affections are warped and deranged by that which we traditionally call 'original sin.'

We are not concerned with the manifold objections to this doctrine which are so frequently urged from different quarters at the present time. 'Original sin' is a phrase which may or may not

be fairly open to criticism ; but in any case we contend that it is the compendious statement of a fact attested by universal experience—the fact of universal sinfulness or shortcoming. This fact (or 'law,' as St. Paul calls it[1]) is quite independent of the explicit teaching of revelation. Almost every race has attempted a solution of the mysterious fact that man everywhere and always has felt himself called to the life of righteousness and of fellowship with God, and has perpetually fallen short of it ; that while every other creature strives towards its own good, man habitually chooses what is for his hurt. The Hebrew tradition recorded in Genesis is one of many attempted solutions of the problem ; and it should be noticed that neither the New Testament nor early Christian theology *invariably* connects the fact of universal sinfulness with Adam's primal transgression. St. Paul, for example, while he emphatically asserts the fact of 'original sin' as the indispensable basis of any reasoned doctrine of redemption, finds it sufficient for his purpose to declare in general terms that *all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.*[2] Athanasius uses expressions which recall Coleridge's theory of a universal and simultaneous apostasy.[3] 'Men,' he writes, 'having turned away from things eternal, and, by counsel of the devil, applied themselves to the things of sense, became the cause of their own corruption.'

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[1] Rom. vii. 21 : *εὑρίσκω ἄρα τὸν νόμον τῷ θέλοντι ἐμοὶ ποιεῖν τὸ καλὸν ὅτι ἐμοὶ τὸ κακὸν παράκειται.*

[2] Rom. iii. 23.

[3] See Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, aph. cix.

'Men, having despised what was good, and having shrunk back from the apprehension of it, preferred to seek the objects that were nearer to themselves, to wit, the body and its senses; hence they withdrew their mind from spiritual things, and began to contemplate themselves.'[1] Similarly, the 'fall' is described by Greek writers in purely general terms as 'aversion from the better,' 'departure from what was good.'[2] The postulate of chief importance for Christian ethics is that the mystery of universal sin, the invariable presence in human nature of evil tendencies, should be plainly acknowledged. Sin no doubt changes its form in the course of ages; there are modes of sin which are mere survivals from an earlier stage of social evolution; there are subtle and dangerous forms of anti-social conduct which successfully conceal themselves beneath the surface of a complex civilisation; but in its essence sin is everywhere and always the same. In its religious aspect it is 'aversion from God'; in its moral aspect it is a rebellion against the divinely appointed order of the world; in its social aspect it is the lawless temper that seeks its own at the expense of others. Its presence is 'writ large' on the history of every race; it has left a deep and ineffaceable mark on the literature of the world; it largely accounts for that pervading tone of melancholy which is so curiously characteristic of the classical writers,

[1] *de Incarn.* 5; *c. Gentes*, 3.

[2] κρειττόνων ἀποστροφή, *Ath. de Incarn.* 5; ἡ ἀπὸ τοῦ καλοῦ ἀποχώρησις, Greg. Nyss. *orat. catech.* 5.

and which has been said to constitute the true depth and greatness of the pre-Christian world.[1] Finally, at the root of all religions lies the consciousness that man is summoned by the deepest instincts of his nature to communion with God, and that the life of divine fellowship for which he was created has been mysteriously interrupted.

Thus the *fact* of universal sinfulness is totally distinct from the various solutions of it which the poetic fancy of different races has suggested. But what of the fact itself? What does it imply, and to what is Christian theology committed in maintaining it?

In the first place, the belief in 'original sin,' as we have explained the term—the view that there has been at some point in man's upward development an intrusion of some alien and disturbing element—does not depend upon a literal interpretation of the Hebrew narrative of the fall. The spiritual truth implied in that ancient parable is that moral evil is no essential element in man's nature, but an adventitious *defect* of nature—a defect which, as Augustine repeatedly insists, has its seat, not in the body, but in the *will*.[2] And the verification of the

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[1] There is a catena of passages in Plutarch, *consol. ad Apoll.* vi. foll. See this point further illustrated in Luthardt, *Fundamental Truths of Christianity*, lect. vii., with note 9 [E.T.] pp. 183 and 397 foll. Cp. Wordsworth, *The One Religion*, lect. v. Modern parallels in Byron and Shelley will be familiar to most readers.

[2] See Tertull. *de paen.* iii., and cp. three typical passages in Aug. *de civ. Dei:* xii. 3: 'Nam etiam quod *vitium* consuetudine, nimiove progressu roboratum, velut naturaliter inoleverit, *a*

truth is furnished by the common experience of mankind, as attested in its literature. Everywhere is to be found evidence of man's sense that he has lost his proper relationship to God; that will acts irregularly and in opposition to reason; that the flesh, which should be in subjection to the spirit, has become dominant in human nature, and that moral collapse has been followed by intellectual degradation. The image of God has either faded from men's minds, or become distorted and perverted.[1] At the same time, Christianity is not committed to the modern error of man's total depravity. In the cautious statement of Article IX the English Church implicitly repudiates the extreme Calvinistic position.[2] Man is 'very far gone,' indeed, 'from original righteousness'; his existing condition is that of a sufferer needing help, but he is not totally

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voluntate sumpsit exordium.' xiv. 3: 'Nam corruptio corporis, quae aggravat animam, non peccati primi est causa sed poena; nec caro corruptibilis animam peccatricem, sed anima peccatrix fecit esse corruptibilem carnem.' xiv. 11: 'Fecit itaque Deus, sicut scriptum est, hominem rectum: ac per hoc voluntatis bonae. Non enim rectus esset, bonam non habens voluntatem. Bona igitur voluntas opus est Dei: cum ea quippe ab illo factus est homo. Mala vero voluntas prima, quoniam omnia mala opera praecessit in homine, *defectus* potius fuit quidam ab opere Dei ad sua opera quam opus ullum. . . . Porro mala voluntas [non est] secundum naturam sed contra naturam quia vitium est.'

[1] Rom. i. 21 foll. 'La nature est telle,' says Pascal, 'qu'elle marque partout un Dieu perdu, et dans l'homme, et hors de l'homme' (*Pensées*, p$^{\text{tie.}}$ 2, art. v. § 5).

[2] The language of the Westminster Confession is as follows: 'By their sin, they fell from their original righteousness, and so became dead in sins and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of their soul and body.'

ruined and perverted. St. Bernard, writing in the twelfth century, states admirably the mind of the Church on this point. The image of God, he says, is not altogether lost. 'The fine gold has become dim, but it is still gold; the beauteous colour has faded, but it is not altogether effaced. The will has enslaved itself to sin, but it remains *a will: voluntas nihilominus est, quae se sub peccato tenet voluntarie serviendo?*'[1]

Consequently (to touch upon another point), the doctrine of a 'fall' does not necessarily conflict with evolution. Man has advanced along his predestined line of development. He has to a great extent subdued nature and made it his servant. He has made amazing progress in the sciences and arts which minister to the organisation and enrichment of life; but his advance, even in this sphere, has been undeniably fitful, one-sided and precarious. 'Man progresses, but on lower levels; with pain and difficulty, not easily and with increasing joy.'[2] Nor, again, are Christians committed to any particular theory of physical heredity. The Hebrew doctrine of sin, at least in its later stages, certainly represented human sinfulness as a taint inherited from the progenitor of the race; but modern thinkers, whatever might be their view of heredity, would speak with considerable reserve on such a

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[1] *in Cant.* lxxxii. 2. Cp. lxxxi. 7, and *de grat. et lib. arb.* vii. 21: 'Corruit autem de posse non peccare in non posse non peccare; . . . de posse non turbari in non posse non turbari.'

[2] T. B. Strong, *Manual of Theology*, p. 261. See the whole passage.

point. Some have suggested the possibility of an actual physical lesion having resulted from the first transgression, which might conceivably have left a permanent impress on man's physical constitution. But for a Christian, at any rate, suspense of judgment on this point is the only wisdom. It is wholly impossible to specify what has been actually transmitted by the first man to his posterity. What we can safely assert is that the nature we inherit is in a real sense unbalanced and disorganised; that we start with an adverse bias—with a tendency to follow the lead of the flesh rather than of the spirit. We are sure, too, that though our nature may be mysteriously disordered, the individual person only becomes *guilty* when he identifies himself by an act of will with the lawless tendency; when he ceases to strive against it and admits it, as it were, into the recesses of personality. So much suffices for the immediate purpose of ethics. We have no occasion to follow either those who regard moral as a mere form of physical evil, or those who maintain that the *fall* was actually and in its main aspect *a rise*—a passage from a non-moral stage of life to that in which the mere following of instinct gives place to self-consciousness and to the sense of subjection to moral law. It is indisputable, indeed, that in one sense the first sin marked an epoch in *intellectual* progress—a truth which seems to be suggested in the 'culture-legend' of Gen. iv., which traces to *fallen* man the origin of the useful arts. The dawn of self-consciousness involved, of course, great risks and great possibilities; but it is arbitrary to assert

that man, in order to advance, must not only experience, but *yield to* temptation. For the advance, as we have seen, has by no means been uniform or unbroken. Degradation, as Darwin pointed out long ago, has been a real factor in the chequered history of human civilisation.[1] And this is only one of the many considerations that seem to discredit a view of sin which is in tendency materialistic; regarding it exclusively in its physical aspect, as if sin were merely the anachronistic survival and indulgence of animal instincts, 'the continuance in certain practices, or the satisfying of natural impulses, after that they were first discovered to be contrary to . . . tribal custom.'[2] Sin to the Christian eye is a *spiritual* fact and is to be interpreted in accordance with a spiritual conception of the world. Sin has its seat in the mysterious region of personality; it affects the bodily organism in which it manifests itself, but it cannot be explained by any mere reference to the animal side of man's nature. In this connection we do well to bear in mind how seldom our Lord denounces the characteristic sins that spring from appetite or passion; how stern, on the other hand, are His warnings against what may be called spiritual sins,—self-sufficiency, pride, hardness of heart, contempt of ignorance or helplessness and the like. It is in the higher region or order which interacts with the physical, that we must look for the origin of what we call 'sin.'[3] The doctrine

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[1] See *The Descent of Man*, p. 46.

[2] Tennant, *The Origin of Sin*, p. 91.

[3] Hence Augustine wisely deprecates the attempt to search

of 'original sin' has no doubt a psychological basis; but it also corresponds closely to a particular view of the universe—the view that it is essentially a *spiritual order*. And this is the point of view from which Christian ethics approaches the whole problem of moral evil. No clearness of knowledge in regard to the origin of sin would mitigate the moral miseries which have actually resulted from it;[1] or would in any way appease the bitter consciousness of guilt which is most intense in the saintliest souls, prompting them to confess, with St. Paul, that they are the chief of sinners, or to cry with Augustine, *Sero te amavi, pulchritudo tam antiqua et tam nova, sero te amavi . . . Medicus es, aeger sum: misericors es, miser sum.*[2]

II

For Christian ethics sin is a phenomenon which must be considered in close connection with the revealed doctrine of God. If man is not a mere higher animal, developing his moral life out of non-moral impulses, but a spiritual being, destined by the law of his nature for divine fellowship, sin is

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into the cause of the evil,—in other words, into the origin of sin. Evil, according to him, is the negation of good; defect or declension from that which in the highest degree exists. To inquire into the cause of this defection is like attempting to see darkness, or listen to silence (*de Civ.* xii. 7).

Pascal points out that all questions connected with the origin and transmission of sin are quite beyond our present capacity to answer. 'Aussi, tout cela nous est inutile à savoir pour sortir de nos misères' (*Pensées*, p$^{\text{tie.}}$ ii. 5 § 6).

[2] *Conf.* x. 27, 28.

what the New Testament represents it to be. It is no mere breach of an impersonal law, but a movement of rebellion or lawlessness; it is self-will or self-love setting itself in opposition to the will of the Creator.[1] Sin in its essential nature means the attempt to be independent of God, to find satisfaction in something that is not God.[2] Negatively described, it consists in the absence of the love of God; positively, in misdirected desire[3]—the choice of what is lower than the highest. Sin lies not in any material act or thing, but in the will that chooses amiss or that makes a wrong use of things. The seat of sin is thus within the 'basal self,' the inmost recesses of personality.[4]

The Christian view of sin finds an echo in the common consciousness of humanity. The very fact of remorse is a proof that man knows sin to be 'a false nature,' and 'not in the harmony of things.' But it is possible to dwell with exaggerated insistence on the fact of universal sinfulness, to take a morbid and distorted view of life, to impute guilt

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[1] 1 St. John iii. 4: ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία.

[2] Cp. Aug. *Conf.* i. 20: 'Hoc peccabam quod non in Ipso sed in creaturis ejus, me atque ceteris, voluptates, sublimitates, veritates quaerebam.'

[3] Virtue, on the other hand, is desire directed aright. 'Nil aliud virtutes nisi ordinatae affectiones' (Bern. *de grat. etc.* vi. 17).

[4] Aug. *de vera rel.* xxiii.: 'Vitium animae non natura eius sed contra naturam est, nihilque aliud est quam peccatum et poena peccata.' *de Gen. ad lit. imperf.* lib. i. 3: The catholic creed teaches that sin consists 'non in rebus ipsis, sed in usu earum non legitimo.'

where there is (in a sense, at least) no law, to underrate the virtues of the 'natural man.' There is a temper which unduly exaggerates the idea of sin and of the essential worthlessness of unregenerate human nature; it is this habit of mind which evokes passionate protests from those who think that the best hope for the regeneration of society lies in appealing rather to self-respect and to average social instincts than to the sense of personal sinfulness. No lasting reform of men's characters and institutions can be secured without some insight, not only into the needs and limitations of human nature, but into the good elements present in the social life of mankind—those which are already working in the world, and have already brought about so many beneficent changes.[1] And, further, there will always be those to whom the traditional antithesis of 'salvation' and 'sin' will appeal with less force than the group of ideas connected with 'life and death,' 'sickness and health.'[2] At the same time, all minimising views of sin which treat it as a triviality, or infirmity, or necessity, though seeming to be charitable, are really insulting to human nature. They imply that man is either a victim of necessity or that he is too weak to be virtuous. Such views tend directly to undermine the sense of personal responsibility and even to confound moral with physical evil, looking on it not with disapprobation

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[1] Cp. Prof. H. Jones on 'The Working Faith of the Social Reformer' (*Hibbert Journal*, Oct. 1905, p. 46).

[2] This thought was developed in a University sermon preached Jan. 31, 1909, by the Rev. J. H. Skrine.

as *sin*, but with scientific interest as a mere *disease* of nature. They also fail to measure aright the phenomena that need explanation. For sin, through the mutual action and reaction of sinful wills, has grown into an organised kingdom of wickedness. There is a far-reaching solidarity of evil; it is a vast and all-pervading power in the life of humanity, *a mystery of iniquity* standing in defiant antagonism over against the kingdom of God. This is what St. John repeatedly calls 'the world,' meaning by that term the visible order of society regarded as alien from and opposed to God. It is the strength of Christianity that, with an idealistic conception of the world as ultimately subject to the control of an all-wise and all-holy Will, it combines a 'common-sense realism,' which refuses to ignore the actual condition of humanity. Man can only fulfil his proper function and hold his true place in the universe in so far as he is redeemed from the sin which thwarts and mars his endeavours, and is enabled by divine power to become all that he is capable of being.

III

What, then, does 'redemption,' regarded as an ethical process, involve?

It is manifest that since God is the Head and Centre of the realm of personality with which morality is concerned,[1] human sin necessarily

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[1] Aquinas, *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 100, art. 5, speaks of God as 'princeps communitatis.'

involves alienation between *persons*—a breach of sympathy. The unity between God and man is primarily a moral unity—a unity of affection, purpose and will. It is because sin as a matter of experience interrupts this unity that there is need of *atonement*, which implies (1) a redemptive act of reconciliation on God's part: *God in Christ reconciling the world to himself;*[1] (2) a change of will and purpose on the part of man—the recognition and abandonment of that which has been the cause of alienation.

In what remains of this chapter it will be desirable to briefly consider these two aspects of the redemptive process, and to indicate its bearing upon human character and life.

(1) As regards the divine side of the redemptive process, it is only necessary to give a summary of what theology calls the doctrine of Atonement. Let it suffice, then, to say that, according to the teaching of the New Testament—teaching to which the spiritual experience of Christendom has set its seal—the Son of God was made flesh in order to act representatively on behalf of man and to act instrumentally upon the nature of man. He lived and toiled, suffered and died, in order to satisfy the divine claim upon human nature; and also in order to re-create that nature from within—to raise it up once more from its 'fallen' state to the height of its proper destiny. The Saviour of mankind could thus act for and in His brethren in virtue of that very 'solidarity' of the race which had involved

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[1] 2 Cor. v. 19.

the whole of human nature in the consequences of the primal transgression. The very law which had extended to *all* the loss and corruption caused by the first lapse from righteousness was used as a means of conveying to *all* the life-giving grace of Christ's humanity. *As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*[1]

But what, in its essence, was (and is) the Atonement? It was a real reunion of *will* with *will;* in other words, it was an essentially spiritual and moral fact. In the 'obedience' of the Man Christ Jesus, in the attitude towards sin which He sustained throughout His earthly life and consummated on Calvary, the will of man once more surrendered itself wholly and perfectly to the will of God. *Non mors* (to quote the familiar sentence of Bernard), *sed voluntas placuit sponte morientis.*[2] The ethical significance of Christ's sacrifice lay in the fact that it embodied the triumph of a devoted and invincible human will—identifying itself to the uttermost with the will of God concerning sin: His will that sin should suffer and that righteousness should prevail *in the very nature* which had swerved from its original and ideal line of development.

Thus at the root of that reconstruction of character which is the practical object of Christian

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[1] 1 Cor. xv. 22. Cp. Rom. v. 12 foll. See the admirable sermon (no. x.) in H. S. Holland's *Creed and Character*. A typical patristic passage may be found in Irenaeus, v. 16. 3; cp. v. 17. 1.

[2] *de err. Abael.* viii. 21. Cp. Moberly, *The Atonement, etc.* p. 245.

ethics lies an ethical and spiritual fact: a representative act of self-consecration and self-sacrifice which is no mere formal or external 'transaction,' but the essential expression of a vital moral reality, namely, the restoration of man's will to a state of harmony and 'at-one-ment' with the will of God. Nothing less or lower than this is implied in every passage of the New Testament which touches on the inner significance of the Redeemer's death, notably in the Epistle to the Hebrews.[1] Hence St. Paul uses the comprehensive expression ὑπακοή to describe the atoning merit of Christ's self-sacrifice. Christ was, in the all-inclusive sense of the word, 'obedient.'[2] He exhibited human life as it ought to be—in its perfect dependence upon God, its entire submission to His will, its unreserved devotion to His service. The element of *voluntariness*, then, is of crucial importance in estimating the moral import of the Atonement. It is the unswerving *will* of the divine victim that wins acceptance for the race of which He is the natural representative; it is His *voluntary* submission to the righteous requirement of the All-holy that carries with it our submission;[3] in Him the race accepts the penalty of guilt; in Him it offers homage to the moral law

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[1] See esp. Heb. x. 1–12.

[2] Rom. v. 19; Phil. ii. 8. Cp. Moberly, *Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 245: 'It is not the death itself which is acceptable to the God of life, but the vital self-identification with the holiness of God, the perfect self-dedication and self-surrender which is represented . . . by voluntary acceptance of penitential or penal death.'

[3] Ruffinus, *in symb. Apost.* xl.: 'Si enim constat quod non in

which is identical with the will of its holy and merciful Creator.

The Atonement is, in the first instance, an outward and historical event, though in its essential significance it is a spiritual, and in its issues an eternal, fact. But the righteousness which God demands of us cannot be merely external to us; it cannot be something offered on our behalf and having no relation to our will and character. The Atonement, therefore, is only consummated when it becomes an inward and personal fact—when it is, so to speak, translated into character, and represents the attitude of the individual will in each member of the redeemed race. The very spirit and purpose of the Mediator must become the spirit and purpose of those whom He represented in His life of obedience and sacrificial death, if the reconciliation that He effected is to become a living fact of personal experience. Accordingly, the New Testament leads us to see in the gift of Pentecost the blessing which crowns and consummates the work of Calvary. The presence of the divine Spirit is the law of living power which enables the believing Christian to share the mind of Christ—His faith, His steadfastness, His devotion to God, His attitude to sin. By the operation of the Spirit the very submissiveness of Christ, the very zeal for righteousness which filled His sacrifice with prevailing power, is mystically imparted to the Christian. Christ is

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facto sed in *voluntate* sit crimen, sicut mala voluntas . . . peccato me et morti fecit obnoxium; ita in bonum voluntas mutata, auctore bono Deo, innocentiae me reddidit et vitae.'

formed[1] in those for whom He suffered; He becomes *in them* a principle of spiritual life. He becomes *in* us all that He has become *for* us.[2] Through and in Him the reconciliation between God and man becomes a matter of living spiritual experience.[3] The fruit of His obedience and of His victory over evil is communicated to His brethren.

(2) So we approach the other aspect of the moral fact which we comprehensively call the 'Atonement.' The work of Christ, in all its spiritual significance and in its abiding issues, has to be appropriated by man; and the means by which this takes place is faith issuing in repentance; the act of turning *to God* and *from sin*.[4] The meaning of faith will be more particularly studied in another connection. The point that mainly needs attention here is that sin, being the initial hindrance to the right development of character, needs not only to be overcome by an act of divine power, but to be repudiated by the will of man himself. Repentance lies at the very threshold of the new life, and it is an act of the entire personality. It means 'the entire opposition of our entire selves to sin.'[5] It implies an act of *reason*—a real intellectual recognition of the filial relation in which we stand to

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[1] Gal. iv. 19.

[2] See Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 179; also Moberly (*The Atonement*, *etc.* chh. vii., ix., xi.), who deals exhaustively with this great subject.

[3] Rom. v. 11.

[4] Consider Acts xx. 21: *τὴν εἰς τὸν Θεὸν μετάνοιαν*, and Heb. vi. 1: *μετάνοια ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων*.

[5] Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 148.

God, and of the fact that sin is no mere blunder or misfortune, but an act of rebellion against God's sovereign claim upon His creature.[1] Repentance also comprises an element of *emotion*—of the 'godly sorrow' alluded to by St. Paul, which mourns for sin as a wrong done to a loving and compassionate Father. Lastly, *the will* conceives a new moral energy, and braces itself for the task of making satisfaction and amending what has been done amiss. Thus the entire self takes part in the act of repentance. And in this change of mind or will (μετάνοια) begins that inward operation of the Holy Spirit which has been mentioned above. For in the conversion of man's will, a divine power manifests itself. It is the work of the Spirit of grace to initiate, to carry on and to perfect the growth of penitence in the soul. He it is who enlightens reason, kindles love, and strengthens will; who, in a word, transfigures the whole personality and 'conforms' it to the likeness of Christ; enabling the individual soul to see sin with the eyes of Christ, to judge it with His judgment, to put it away in union with His will, to triumph over it in the power of His victory. Repentance, in fact, implies a moral change which only the power of God can accomplish. Hence it is repeatedly spoken of in the New Testament as

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[1] This intellectual aspect of repentance is prominent in Hooker's treatment, *Eccl. Pol.* vi. 3. 2 foll. 'By faith,' he says, 'are discovered the principles of this action, whereunto, unless the *understanding* do first assent, there can follow in the will towards penitency no inclination at all.'

a *gift* of God.[1] It is He who 'creates' the new heart, and 'turns' it into the way of righteousness.

Such, then, in its essential elements is the process by which man appropriates the work of Christ, and (so to speak) identifies his own will and personality with that of the Redeemer. For our present purpose it is needless to make a precise distinction between conversion and repentance. We are considering the process as an initial and preparatory stage in the development of Christian character; and it will have appeared that the Christian life begins, continues, and ends in a spirit of *dependence* on God. In morals, as in knowledge, the way of truth and perfection is entered by the gate of humility. 'I would have you,' writes Augustine to an inquirer, 'subject yourself with all possible submissiveness to the Word of God made man; and not construct for yourself any other road to the apprehension and maintenance of truth than was constructed by Him who, as God, perceived the weakness of our steps. And that road is first, humility; second, humility; third, humility; and how often soever you might repeat the question, I should give this reply.'[2] The revelation of God, of His requirement and of His grace, involves the revelation to man of his own inherent incapacity and helplessness. Religion, whether regarded as an intellectual system or as a moral

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[1] Cp. Acts v. 31; xi. 18; 2 Tim. ii. 25.

[2] Aug. *epist.* cxviii. (*ad Dioscorum*) 22. Cp. the fine passage in which Pascal contrasts pagan and Christian ideas on this point (*Pensées*, p$^{\text{tie.}}$ 2, art. iv. § 12).

discipline, appeals equally to the sense of need; and without 'poverty of spirit,' without the consciousness of shortcoming, we can make no progress towards a perfection which essentially consists in the crowning of human aspiration and endeavour by a divine *gift.*

CHAPTER VI

THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

'Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est. An potest aliquis supra fortunam nisi ab illo adjutus exsurgere? Ille dat consilia magnifica et erecta. In unoquoque virorum bonorum . . . habitat Deus.'—SENECA.

WHAT has been said in regard to the need of humanity, of course implies that man is called to a life—the life of fellowship and communion with God—to which he cannot attain by his unassisted natural powers.[1] For, as Aristotle reminds us, the true 'nature' of man is that which comes about when his development has reached its goal; that is to say, it includes all that he potentially has it in him to become.[2] And since Christianity

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[1] Aquinas, *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 62. 1: The well-being or happiness of man is twofold: 'una quidem proportionata humanae naturae, ad quam scilicet homo pervenire potest per principia suae naturae. Alia autem est beatitudo naturam hominis excedens, ad quam homo sola divina virtute pervenire potest,' etc.

[2] Arist. *Pol.* i. 2. 8: *οἷον γὰρ ἕκαστόν ἐστι τῆς γενέσεως τελεσθείσης, ταύτην φαμὲν τὴν φύσιν εἶναι ἑκάστου, ὥσπερ ἀνθρώπου, ἵππου, οἰκίας.* Butler, in the preface to his *Sermons*, § 14, points out that 'It is from considering the relations which the several appetites and passions in the inward frame have to each other, and above all, the supremacy of reflection or conscience, that we get the idea of the system or constitution of human nature.'

looks upon human nature as in a real sense disordered, it teaches that it can only attain to its ideal possibilities by supernatural aid. In his upward movement man needs to be renewed, sustained, assisted by the operation of God. He can produce nothing that is in the highest sense 'good' apart from the grace or help of God. *Multa Deus facit in homine bona quae non facit homo* is the careful language of a sixth-century council.[1] We do not unduly exalt man when we assert with the Apostle that he is capable of being *a partaker of the divine nature;*[2] nor is it derogatory to him to hold that this high destiny is only attainable by divine aid. In other words, the true life which consists in union with God must be in the last resort His own gift.

The New Testament repeatedly groups together three virtues, or principles of action, which bring the Christian believer into, and maintain him in, his ideal relationship to God.[3] Faith, hope, and love are commonly called 'theological virtues,' for reasons which Aquinas briefly enumerates. They have, he says, God for their object; they bring us into our true relation to God; they are imparted to us by God alone, and they are matter of express revelation.[4] It might be added that the

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[1] Conc. Araus. Secundum (529), *Can.* xx. Note the words which follow: 'Nulla vero facit homo bona quae non praestat Deus ut faciat homo.'

[2] 2 Pet. i. 4.

[3] See *e.g.* Rom. v. 1–5; 1 Thess. i. 2, 3; Col. i. 3–5; Heb. x. 22–24; 1 Pet. i. 21, 22.

[4] *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 162. resp.

name implies the vital bearing of creed on conduct. The revelation of God in Christ lies at the root of the moral process by which we fulfil the law of our nature. In fact, the ordinary springs of action—appetites, passions, affections, sentiments—yield to certain higher principles, resulting directly from man's revealed relation to God. The new knowledge of God conveyed to us in the life, teaching and death of Christ, is also a new inspiration. It stimulates thought, affection and will by presenting them with a new object, and consequently it tends to develope in man a new attitude towards God and new possibilities of character. By *faith* we appropriate the new facts revealed in Christ; the good-will and Fatherly love of God, the divine victory over sin, the reality of our sonship, the possibility of goodness and blessedness. By *hope* we are enabled to look confidently for the ultimate fulfilment of the divine purpose concerning us. By *love* we respond to the manifested love of God, and embrace in union with Him the true end of creation, which includes a good, not merely personal, but universal.

It will be worth while to investigate these three principles somewhat more closely.

Faith is a word not altogether free from ambiguity, but practically it signifies, for Christian ethics, a habit of confidence in the revealed character of God: or (as it might be otherwise expressed) of confidence in the spirituality of the universe. The rationality of faith, regarded as a principle of action, is proved by the fact that we continually

exercise it in the affairs of everyday life.[1] If it begins with an act of intellectual apprehension, it is yet no mere mental act, but issues in confidence, trust, and self-committal. It becomes transformed into a *moral temper*—a state of will, an attitude of the entire personality. It prompts to energetic action; it proves its quality in 'works' of righteousness and power.[2]

Hence we are said to be 'justified by faith.' The beginning of the Godward life consists in simple acceptance of the reality of God's good will towards us, trustful dependence on Him for pardon, cleansing and renewal. And this disposition 'justifies' us; that is, it wins for us acceptance with Him who sees the end in the beginning, and who receives us into His favour for the sake of that which we are on the way to become. Even in its initial stage faith is in a real sense 'justified by works.'[3] It is

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[1] Cp. Aug. *de util. cred.* xii. 26: 'Multa possunt afferri quibus ostendatur nihil omnino humanae societatis incolume remanere, si nihil credere statuerimus quod non possumus tenere perceptum.' This is a familiar argument with the Fathers as with later writers; see Hurter's note on the passage (*Sanct. Patr. opusc. selecta.* vi. p. 59).

[2] Heb. xi.; St. James ii. 14 foll.; cp. Iren. iv. 6. 5: 'Credere ei est facere ejus voluntatem.' So Augustine speaks of 'the *will* whereby one believes in God,' *de spir. et litt.* lviii.

[3] Hence Pet. Lomb. (*sent.* iii. dist. 23. 4 and 9) defines faith as follows: 'Credere in Deum est credendo amare, credendo in eum ire, credendo ei adhaerere et ejus membris incorporari. Per hanc fidem justificatur impius *ut deinde ipsa fides incipiat per dilectionem operari.*' Cp. a clear statement by Dr. Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 153: 'The moment a human life has really made Jesus Christ its *end*, although that end be as yet only

'righteousness,' not in its final or complete form, but in its germ and essence. We are accepted for the sake of that which we may become—that which we *mean* and *intend* to become—in Christ, to whom the act of faith vitally unites us, and *into whom* we begin by faith *to grow up in all things*.[1] 'God loves us,' says Augustine, 'as we are destined to become by His gift; not as we actually are by our own merit.'[2]

Next in order to faith usually stands *hope*, that is, the expectation of good things to come, the temper that looks forward to the realisation of God's purpose for man and for the universe. What the Christian hopes for is the perfection of his nature, and the fuller manifestation of Him who has made Himself known to man in Jesus Christ.[3] Hope again, like faith, is a principle of *action*, though, like faith, it is concerned with what is future and unseen. It inspires endurance and self-control; it imparts to the will firmness and stability.[4] It colours our view of human life, standing midway between shallow optimism and faithless pessimism. Hopelessness undermines energy by paralysing will, whereas hope nerves the will for that habit of long-suffering

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the end of purpose, and infinitely not yet the end of attainment, that moment God imputes to that life what it means and intends as though it had already accomplished it.' There is a similar passage on p. 108.

[1] Eph. iv. 15.

[2] 'Tales nos Deus amat quales futuri sumus Ipsius dono, non quales sumus nostro merito' (qu. in Conc. Araus. Secundum, *can*. xii.).

[3] See Gal. v. 5; Rom. v. 2.

[4] Heb. vi. 19, with Westcott's note.

endurance which the New Testament regards as a form of virtuous *energy*.[1] It has been rightly compared, as an act of choice and will, to the highest type of courage—the courage which makes great ventures, and is enabled to win great victories because it subjects 'imagination to truth and reason and God.'[2]

Finally, the most vital element in the new life is *love*—love in man responding to the love of God; love kindled by a vivid sense of the goodness of God and of the things which He has wrought in order to make possible our union with Him and the fulfilment of His purpose in us. *We love him because he first loved us.*[3] This is the supreme impelling motive or spring of action to which St. Paul appeals in Rom. xii. 1: *I beseech you by the mercies of God.* From another point of view love is the 'great commandment,' the all-sufficing fulfilment of the law.[4] The life which Christianity at once requires and imparts is love; the absence of love is moral death.[5] And love acts directly upon character. It guides choice, controls and educates desire, and invigorates will. It imparts to man the very likeness of God.[6] Thus the most difficult problem of ethics finds its solution. For Christ combines with the revelation of God's requirement

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[1] Col. i. 11; cp. Rom. viii. 25.

[2] R. W. Church, *Advent Sermons*, no. iv., pp. 96 foll.

[3] 1 St. John iv. 19.

[4] St. Matt. xxii. 37.

[5] Aug. *de mor. eccl.* xix.: 'Cum mors ipsa sit non diligere Deum.'

[6] *Ibid.* xxiii.: 'Fit per caritatem ut conformemur Deo.'

a disclosure of His redemptive love, and in so doing braces the will for its task.[1] Obligation is transformed into a bond between persons. The power of a new affection, a new enthusiasm, in the hearts of men, is the 'virtue-making' power of the gospel. For love is even more than *the fulfilling of the law.* It is that which makes all tasks easy, all burdens light, all service a sacrifice of praise and joy. It constitutes the unity of law and impulse. For the Spirit who reveals the will of God imparts the power by which it is fulfilled.[2]

It will, perhaps, be objected that there is something artificial in the distinction that has been drawn between faith, hope, and love, and between the different functions ascribed to each.[3] For, in fact, they are three aspects or modes of the relationship in which the one indivisible personality stands towards its object; at one and the same moment, and in reference to one and the same object, we believe, we hope, and we love.[4] If a logical order is sought for, it may doubtless be found; but precise distinctions in regard to such subject-matter are unsatisfying. Perhaps the best account of the order in which the 'theological virtues' emerge and act upon the will is given in the form of a practical

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[1] Petav. *de Incarn.* ii. 7, § 12: '*Voluntatem* suavi et robusto quodam ardore caritatis inflammat.'

[2] Rom. v. 5.

[3] Aquinas seems to feel this when he raises the question, 'utrum fides sit prior spe, et spes charitate' (i. ii^{ae}, 62. 4).

[4] Aug. *enchir.* viii.: 'Proinde nec amor sine spe est nec sine amore spes neque utrumque sine fide.' Cp. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 43.

syllogism, such as St. Bernard suggests: 'Faith says, Great and inconceivable goods have been prepared by God for His faithful servants; hope says, For me are those things kept in store; love says, I hasten towards them.'[1] Or we may look at the Godward movement of the soul from the standpoint of personality, and see in faith the exercise of intelligence, in hope the effort of will, in love the consecration of desire. It is in love, at any rate, that the impulse to self-surrender culminates; love is the energy which concentrates and combines the activity of all other functions. It is accordingly described by St. Paul as *the bond of perfectness*,[2] the all-embracing virtue without which even faith is nothing worth. We shall see later on that every separate Christian grace is simply the display of love in some particular relationship to God or to our fellow-men. The *great and first commandment*, which sums up the whole meaning and scope of the moral life, is, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*[3]

The problem of practical morality accordingly resolves itself into the simple question, How is the life of union with God to be maintained and developed? The 'theological' virtues, as we have seen, are so called because they are imparted by God Himself. Our union with Him depends on the continuous action of His grace and power. In

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[1] Bern. *in Ps.* 'Qui habitat,' x. 1.

[2] Col. iii. 14: σύνδεσμος τῆς τελειότητος.

[3] St. Matt. xxii. 37.

Christ, God has displayed His pity towards a morally weak and helpless race.[1] In a sense, we are passive objects of the divine compassion—spoils in the hand of a conqueror who has entered into the house of the strong man and spoiled his goods;[2] and the life of union with God depends upon the exercise of His upholding and protecting mercy; we are *kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.*[3] As men grow older they are inclined to dwell more habitually on this aspect of truth. 'Less and less, I think,' writes Phillips Brooks, 'grows the consciousness of seeking God. Greater and greater grows the certainty that He is seeking us and giving Himself to us to the complete measure of our present capacity. That is love—not that we loved Him, but that He loved us.'[4] Such a habit of thought is indeed a powerful aid to perseverance. But it is obvious that the life of union with God is also, in the strictest sense, a *moral* fact, *i.e.* a fact that depends on the persistence of man's will—what Anselm calls, *acceptae bonae voluntatis spontanea et amata tenacitas.*[5] We have to hold fast to God, to cleave to Him with our whole personality, and this, of course, is the task of the will.[6] We have, as St.

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[1] Rom. v. 6.

[2] St. Matt. xii. 29. Bern. *de err. Abael.* vi. § 16: 'Utinam ego inveniar in his spoliis quibus spoliatae sunt contrariae potestates, traductus et ipse in possessionem Domini,' etc.

[3] 1 Pet. i. 5; cp. St. John x. 28, 29.

[4] *Life of Phillips Brooks*, by A. G. V. Allen, vol. ii. p. 871.

[5] *Cur Deus Homo?* i. 10.

[6] Aug. *enarr. in Ps.* xxxix. 27: 'Ut permaneas in manu artificis bona voluntas facit.' Cp. his language about baptism,

Paul expresses it, to apprehend that for which we were *apprehended by Christ Jesus*.[1] Accordingly, the question suggests itself, How the life of union—the life of faith, hope and love—is to be sustained on the side of man? To this inquiry an answer may be appropriately given—at least in outline—at this point.

And, first, since the 'theological' virtues are primarily a divine gift, they are to be sought by *prayer*. In regard to prayer it is only necessary here to point out that the word is used in the widest sense, including all the parts and elements of devotion.[2] The real answer to true prayer, whatever form it takes, is not this or that gift of God, but His all-embracing gift of the Holy Spirit,[3] whose presence in the soul is identical with 'grace,' and is a law of living power by which we are enabled to know and to fulfil the will of God. With prayer may be connected *meditation*, that tranquil contemplation of divine truth which is an energy of the whole personality, directing itself towards God as the supreme Object of thought, love and will. Meditation is the union of bible-reading with prayer: it is converse with One who in Scripture speaks to us and invites us to speak to Him. For

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epist. xcviii. 10: 'Cum homo sapere coeperit, non illud sacramentum repetet sed intelliget, ejusque veritati consona etiam voluntate coaptabitur.'

[1] Phil. iii. 12.

[2] Aquin. *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 108. 3 ad 4: 'Quaecumque propter cultum Dei fiunt reducuntur ad *orationem*.'

[3] St. Luke xi. 13.

the friendship of man with God grows, as all other friendship does, through communion: *καθ' ὅσον κοινωνοῦσιν, ἐπὶ τοσοῦτόν ἐστι φιλία.*[1] Love grows also through *thanksgiving*, which is a principal but much-neglected duty of the Christian life.[2] 'Would you know,' asks William Law, 'who is the greatest saint in the world? . . . It is he who is always thankful to God, who wills everything that God wills, who receives everything as an instance of God's goodness, and has an heart always ready to praise God.'[3] The thankful heart finds life transfigured: it discerns everywhere tokens of a watchful providence of love

> 'Making the springs of time and sense
> Sweet with eternal good.'

It rests in the perpetual sense of divine guidance and discipline. The spirit of thanksgiving checks impatience and despondency; it is the return of the heart to God in 'perpetual benediction.'[4]

And, lastly, love grows and is sustained by unselfish *kindness to our fellow-men.* The example of Christ Himself teaches us that the flame of devotion is fed and sustained by active charity. *He pleased not himself. He went about doing good.* So, in His followers, faith bears fruit in

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[1] Arist. *Eth. Nic.* viii. 9. 1.

[2] Eph. v. 20; Col. iii. 17; 1 Thess. v. 18; Heb. xiii. 15.

[3] *A Serious Call, etc.* ch. xv.

[4] Bern. *in Cant.* xiii. 1: 'Ad locum unde exeunt revertantur flumina gratiarum, ut iterum fluant. Remittatur ad suum principium coeleste profluvium, quo uberius terris refundatur. Qualiter, inquis? Qualiter dicit Apostolus: *In omnibus gratias agentes.*'

deeds, hope thrives by self-forgetful service, love finds in the imitation of God the surest road to an abiding and unbroken fellowship with Him. The whole personality, face to face with the tasks and problems of life, realises that only in the simplicity of dependence on God can it fulfil its ideal possibilities and *prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*[1]

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[1] Rom. xii. 2.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF THE WORLD

'Et dixit qui sedebat in throno : Ecce nova facio omnia.'

We have reached a point at which it is fitting to pause and to consider the bearing of the Christian ideas which have been briefly reviewed in the preceding chapters upon the broad facts of human life. There is a certain *Welt-anschauung*, or philosophy of life, which is characteristically Christian, since it springs from the Christian idea of God and His relation to the universe and to mankind. The facts of life may be studied teleologically as moving towards an ethical goal. For the history of religion is the story of man's gradual discovery and apprehension of the moral will which lies behind phenomena, directing them towards the fulfilment of a rational and righteous purpose. In other words, the knowledge of the true God, manifested once for all in Christ, involves the conception of the world as a spiritual order in which moral ends are supreme. And the end of history coincides with that of man ; the aim of rational human endeavour is also the ultimate goal of the universe. Thus, for ethics, the question which stands in the forefront, and which Revelation enables us to

answer confidently and securely, is the question, What is the Highest Good?

We remark at the outset that the Highest Good is not uniformly described in the New Testament. But we may fairly claim that while the inspired writers vary in their mode of describing the ultimate goal of the universe, they are at one in their conception of it as an exalted form of *life*. In the synoptic Gospels the *summum bonum* is the 'kingdom of God,' or 'of heaven'; in the Fourth Gospel it is plainly defined as 'eternal life'—a life which has its centre, its source, its typical embodiment, in the Person of the Redeemer Himself. St. Paul speaks as if the moral goal of the universe were the realisation in man of the 'righteousness of God' (*δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ*). It is this that the gospel reveals; this in the attainment of which human blessedness consists. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, again, conceives the end of man as free and unrestricted access to, and communion with, God. Thus accounts of the Highest Good vary, but all the writers alike regard it as a form of life—a relationship that involves a progressive and unending assimilation to God Himself.[1] Further, we notice that to these four different aspects of the gift promised by Christianity correspond four aspects of the Redeemer's work. As Founder and Lord of the kingdom, He alone opens its gate to mankind; He is the source and typical representative of that filial righteousness which

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[1] Clem. Alex. *quis div. salv.* 7: *ἡ ἐπίγνωσις αὐτοῦ* [*τοῦ Θεοῦ*] *καὶ οἰκείωσις καὶ ἡ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀγάπη καὶ ἐξομοίωσις μόνη ζωή.*

wins for men acceptance with God ; He is Himself the high priest of humanity, who brings them near to God ; He is the Word of the Father who communicates the gift of eternal life. For our present purpose, however, it will suffice to take the words recorded in St. Matt. vi. 33, as a convenient summary of His teaching on the subject of the Highest Good : *Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you.*[1] The very form of the utterance implies the indissoluble connection between man's well-being in its noblest sense and the moral life ; it also relegates to a subordinate place the ordinary tasks of human civilisation and culture. They have value only in so far as they minister to the purposes of the kingdom. Our Lord does not ignore the existing order of society ; but He looks upon it as needing renewal and transformation. The kingdom is a vital principle that works in human society like leaven, as an element of change and disturbance ; yet it is a *kingdom* making for regeneration, for spiritual order and efficiency.[2]

Without however dwelling further on this point, we may briefly elucidate a certain complexity in the idea of the kingdom.

1. The kingdom is sometimes spoken of as a good to be sought, appropriated and enjoyed by

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[1] On the characteristic phrase, 'kingdom of heaven' ('heaven' being the common euphemism for 'God,' which meets us elsewhere), see Bp. Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, p. 63.

[2] Cp. St. Matt. xiii. 33 with H. S. Holland's sermon in *God's City*, pp. 142 foll.

individuals here on earth; a sphere of blessing or privilege already existing 'within' or 'among' men.[1] It consists in the actual and present possession of eternal life;[2] the rule of God and of His grace in human personality; the state of blessedness which results from living fellowship with God—from adherence to Him who is the immutable and supreme Good. Virtually, then, the kingdom of God is realised wherever true goodness manifests itself; it consists in the filial fulfilment of the will of God, and in that spiritual peace, that sense of exalted pleasure, which accompanies well-doing. The kingdom is *righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.*[3] And though it is true that goodness cannot, under present conditions, be other than imperfect and progressive, and that therefore blessedness cannot be final and complete, yet, potentially at least, the kingdom of God, with all that it implies of sanctity and bliss, is a present possession. Christ does not say, *Blessed shall be*, but *Blessed are* the poor in spirit, the merciful, the meek, the pure in heart. The Highest Good is not merely goodness, nor merely blessedness, but the combination of both,—here in such measure as is possible in a world of change and sin, hereafter in undisturbed and harmonious fulness.

What has been said, however, implies that the Highest Good is the actual rule of God in the soul of man. In the strict sense of the term, therefore, the Highest Good is none other than God Himself.

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[1] St. Luke xvii. 21.

[2] St. John v. 24.

[3] Rom. xiv. 17.

For God Himself dwelling in man is the new principle of moral power and present blessedness in which the kingdom consists. He Himself 'is all that which the human spirit is capable of becoming.'[1] To 'have' God is blessedness; to do His will is eternal life. He is the crown of all spiritual effort, the fulfilment of every hope, the answer to every true-hearted prayer.[2] Thus, as Bernard points out, the chief good is at once the cause and the culmination of human blessedness.[3]

2. In another aspect the kingdom of God is often spoken of in Scripture eschatologically as an object of hope, a future consummation; as the goal of the entire cosmic process, and especially of human endeavour. For that end, towards which nature blindly tends, is by rational beings consciously and intelligently embraced.[4] An earthly phase of the kingdom—a stage of gradual growth and development—is implied in some of the parables

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[1] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 223.

[2] Aug. *de mor. eccl.* xiii.: 'Bonorum summa Deus nobis est.' *de Trin.* viii. 4: '[Deus] bonum omnis boni, ipsum bonum.' *epist.* cxxx. 24: 'Quid sit beatum esse a multis multa sunt disputata, sed nos ad multos et ad multa quid imus? Breviter in scriptura Dei veraciterque dictum est *Beatus populus cuius est Dominus Deus ipsius*.'

[3] Bern. *in Psal.* 'Qui habitat,' ix. 1: 'Ipse auctor, Ipse remunerator operis, Ipse remuneratio tota: ut summum illud bonum, cuius nimirum tam perfecta est simplicitas in se ipso, duplex quodammodo videatur in nobis causa bonorum, effectiva scilicet et finalis.'

[4] Aquin. *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 1. 2: 'Illa quae rationem habent seipsa movent ad finem . . . illa vero quae ratione carent, tendunt in finem propter naturalem inclinationem quasi ab alio mota,' etc.

recorded by St. Matthew; others, again, direct attention to the future consummation of the kingdom in eternity. The idea of a manifested kingdom or reign of God is a very familiar element in Hebrew prophecy; as it appears in our Lord's teaching, it is largely coloured by the theocratic conceptions of the Old Testament. Christ seems, indeed, to connect the manifestation of the kingdom with the ultimate issues of His redemptive work, and especially with His second coming. As He in His earthly life was the living embodiment of the kingdom, so by Him, as the glorified and uplifted Son of Man, it will be finally consummated. It will be purified by judgment. It will 'come' to crown the hopes and reward the labours of the righteous. It will be purged of *all things that offend* and will be manifested in its true character. The principle of good will so achieve its final victory over evil. But the coming of the kingdom is not a 'catastrophic' event in the sense that it is a single and definite crisis; it is prefigured and anticipated in many different manifestations of the divine power in history. Christ once came to judgment,[1] and that coming is 'the type and promise of other comings through the long ages, till the earthly life of humanity is closed.' In the final coming, 'the first coming on earth and the later comings in history shall be shown in their full import.'[2] Meanwhile, though the manifestation of the kingdom lies in the future, the main factor that renders it possible

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[1] St. John ix. 39.

[2] Westcott, *The Historic Faith*, 91, 95.

already operates wherever creaturely life realises its true dependence upon God and responds with intelligent freedom and in the consciousness of sonship, to His will and purpose. *Nondum regnat hoc regnum*, says Augustine. But at least it is an order of things already present and operative, and only awaiting its due consummation. For the kingdom essentially means the sphere in which God's will is being done; the petition, *Thy kingdom come*, is a prayer for the extension and manifestation of that which already exists as a fact of real experience.[1] Thus the peculiarly Christian conception of a divine indwelling in humanity seems to harmonise what appear at first sight to be conflicting aspects of the kingdom. A typical utterance is that of Petrus Chrysologus, in his Commentary on the Lord's Prayer: 'This is the kingdom of God, when in all men God lives, God acts, God reigns, God is wholly present, according to the Apostle's word that *God may be all and in us all.*'[2]

It is, then, for the coming of the kingdom that we look and wait. To the two aspects of it which we have considered corresponds a twofold experience: on the one hand, the sense of present possession; on the other, the sense of present imperfection. What we already are contains the

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[1] Aug. *de serm. Dom. in monte*, ii. 6. 20: 'Non enim et hic ita dictum est *Adveniat regnum tuum* quasi nunc Deus non regnet. . . . *Adveniat* ergo accipiendum est, manifestetur hominibus.' Cp. Bern. *de grat. et lib. arb.* iv. 12. See generally Bp. Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, lect. ii.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 28 and Eph. iv. 6.

'promise and potency' of what we are destined to become. *Now are we sons of God*, yet we wait for *the adoption.* We are redeemed, yet we look for redemption. We are saved, but we are kept by the power of God for a salvation yet to be revealed.[1] And this falls in with the condition of beings who are undergoing a progressive moral discipline. The highest good for man must be something which he is progressively trained to apprehend and enjoy. The *summum bonum* is a life or state, and it is consistent with a condition of continuous moral *growth* that it should not as yet be manifested *what we shall be.*[2] We apprehend in a measure that towards which we tend, but only under inevitable limitations. As early Christian writers often insist, the perfection of our nature can only be accomplished through that entire self-communication of God to His creatures which belongs to the essence of the chief good.[3] In a very real sense, therefore, Augustine's maxim is true: *Tota vita Christiani boni sanctum desiderium est. . . . Haec est vita nostra, ut desiderando exerceamur.*[4]

We may now proceed to consider the Christian view, first, of human life in general; secondly, of nature; thirdly, of that which impartially pervades both, and is so obviously a leading factor in physical and moral development—the mystery of pain.

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[1] Rom. viii. 23; 1 Pet. i. 5.

[2] 1 St. John iii. 2.

[3] Aquin. *Summa*, iii. 1. 1: 'Ad rationem summi boni pertinet quod summo modo se creaturae communicet.' See Iren. iii. 20. 2; iv. 20. 5; v. 8. 1; Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xxx. 6.

[4] *in epist. Joan ad Parth.* iv. 6.

I

Life manifests itself, as we have already seen, in *character* rather than in activity. Character is the supreme object of interest in the study of life; we measure men not so much by their achievements as by what they are, by the objects which they seek, the things which they love. Life has been roughly defined as 'right loving and hating';[1] and this is in accord with the Christian conception of an all-embracing precept which involves the fulfilment of the law, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, . . . and thy neighbour as thyself.* Life is a schooling in one only lesson—

> 'For life, with all it yields of joy and woe
> And hope and fear—believe the aged friend—
> Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love;
> How love might be, hath been indeed, and is.'[2]

Hence the great characteristic of Christian morality is 'inwardness.' Primitive religion and ethics demanded the performance of certain external actions or ceremonies. This in Christianity yields to the idea of 'fulfilling a personal relation';[3] living, willing, thinking, working *unto the Lord;* conscious of His presence as the unseen witness of human deeds and thoughts; seeking always and

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[1] By Edward Thring; see *Memories of E. Thring*, by J. H. Skrine, ch. x.

[2] R. Browning, *A Death in the Desert.*

[3] Westcott, *Ep. to the Hebrews*, p. 263.

only to please Him.[1] The good man is he who is aware of God in all things and in every place,[2] and the sin of hypocrisy which Christ so sternly denounces means the habit of 'acting' which results from a want of harmony between act and disposition; or, more directly, from forgetfulness of God's presence. The 'hypocrites' of the Gospel discharged certain religious duties as if men were the only witnesses and judges of what they did; and the general tendency of Pharisaism was to multiply injunctions and prohibitions to the point of overlooking the condition of heart and will. The Gospel decisively redresses the balance by spiritualising religion. It lays chief stress on purity of intention; on inward truth, sincerity and devotion. The moral aim it has in view is the 'unification' of the personality; that simplicity for which Socrates prays in the *Phaedrus*: 'Give me beauty in the inward soul, and may the outward and inward man be at one.'[3] 'Purity of heart' means, in fact, the singleness of a personality which finds the supreme satisfaction of its desires and the object of its service

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[1] See 1 Thess. iv. 1; Col. i. 10; comp. Rom. viii. 8; 1 Cor. vii. 32, etc. Contrast the use of ἄρεσκος, ἀρέσκεια in Greek ethics (*e.g.* Arist. *Eth. Nic.* ii. 7. 13; iv. 6. 1.)

[2] Aug. *de spir. et litt.* lxvi.: 'Deum ubique praesentem [cognoscit].'

[3] Plato, *Phaedr.* 279, c. J. Smith, *Select Discourses*, p. 414 [Lond. 1660] quotes (from Clem. Alex.) a saying of Pythagoras, *δεῖ καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἕνα γένεσθαι.* Cp. also Dante, *de monarch.* i. 15: 'In omni genere rerum illud est optimum quod est maxime unum. . . . Hinc videri potest quod peccare nihil est aliud quam progredi ab uno spreto ad multa'—language which recalls Augustine's words in *Conf.* ii. 6. 13.

in God; and to have moral worth an action must be the outcome of an entire bent or disposition of the agent, the good act springing from the good will which carries with it the entire personality. In other words, men act aright in so far as they resemble God, the simplest of all beings; human nature fulfils its true law when it acts as an undivided whole, and directs itself towards a single end.

Life, then, manifests itself chiefly in character. But further, as a gift of God bestowed in accordance with a far-reaching and all-including purpose of love, life for a Christian implies *vocation*. There are few expressions more characteristic of the New Testament than *καλεῖν, κλητοί, κεκλημένοι*. In Christ we are 'called to liberty,' 'called to be saints,' 'called to glory and virtue,' 'called into the grace of Christ.' The word 'called' is, in fact, used absolutely, as implying rational providential purpose in the order of the world—purpose which men may discover and make their own if they will, or may ignore and refuse at their peril. And within the 'calling' that is common to all there are special 'vocations,' corresponding to the various circumstances of particular lives. In one aspect the fulfilment of vocation is the contribution which each individual makes to the accomplishment of the tasks of human civilisation. From another point of view it is an individualising call to fellowship with God.[1] He Himself assigns to each the task the fulfilment of which

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[1] 1 Cor. vii. 24: *ἕκαστος ἐν ᾧ ἐκλήθη, ἐν τούτῳ μενέτω παρὰ Θεῷ.* On vocation see Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, bk. ii. ch. 4; J. R. Illingworth, *Univ. and Cathedral Sermons*, no. 8.

forms his appropriate spiritual discipline; and the duty of the individual Christian is to follow the guidance which God gives in the course of His ordinary providence. He has to consider his own aptitudes, capacities and special opportunities; nor can he rightly ignore the peculiar needs and circumstances of the age and country in which he lives.[1] And when once some special 'calling' is finally adopted, the Christian spirit lends to even the smallest incidental duties, dignity and sacredness. To faith, 'nothing walks with aimless feet'; no incident of life falls outside the range of the spiritual purpose which governs the movement of the universe. It was the misery of the heathen before Christ's coming, that they walked in *the vanity of their mind;*[2] indeed, the leading characteristic of the Gentile world was 'vanity'—aimlessness; misdirected or wasted energy; the organisation of life apart from the recollection of God and of His will. No Christian life can consistently be 'vain' in this sense; for faith in God implies belief in a purpose embracing each individual life;[3] in a function which each can best fulfil. And as this faith necessarily colours the Christian view of life, so it falls in with the essential *social* character of Christian morality. Each man's gift or endowment is a trust to be

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[1] Cp. the advice of Ignatius to Polycarp (*ep. ad Polyc.*), 2 and 3: ὁ καιρὸς ἀπαιτεῖ σε, κ.τ.λ. τοὺς καιροὺς καταμάνθανε· τὸν ὑπὲρ καιρὸν προσδόκα.

[2] Eph. iv. 17.

[3] Notice in 2 Tim. i. 9 the close connection between κλῆσις and ἰδία πρόθεσις καὶ χάρις [Θεοῦ].

employed for the common good[1] and with a single-hearted regard to the ultimate end of moral life—the widest possible extension of the area of human well-being; in Christian language, the 'seeking' and promoting of the kingdom of God on earth.

II

There is also a Christian view of *Nature*—a view diametrically opposed to that which is sometimes called 'Naturalism,' *i.e.* the conception of Nature as a system complete in itself, in which every phenomenon is accounted for by reference to observed, or ascertainable, laws, forces and conditions. Naturalism refers everything, even moral and psychical facts, to physical causes acting uniformly through heredity and environment. Spiritual life is regarded as 'a mere inexplicable incident in the career of a world which is essentially material, . . . and as a whole essentially purposeless.'[2] Christianity, on the other hand, looks at the universe from a spiritual standpoint. The highest thing within the range of our knowledge is *personality*, and physical nature is ultimately subservient to ends that are ethical and spiritual. There is no essential opposition between the material and the spiritual; rather they are linked together in close interdependence. Each sphere, that of matter and that of spirit, interprets the laws of the other. So while Naturalism maintains that the

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[1] See 1 Cor. xii. and xiv.

[2] See the criticism in Rashdall, *op. cit.* ii. 210.

moral world forms a subordinate part of the physical system, the Christian views the universe as a moral order, having its ground in a spiritual reality; an order in which physical nature plays a subordinate and subsidiary part.

The religion of the New Testament uniformly teaches that there is a heavenly or supramundane sphere (τὰ ἐπουράνια) which encompasses, or lies behind, the world of sensible phenomena. This view implies the rationality of miracle; the probability that under certain moral conditions, the spiritual power that is hidden behind phenomena will manifest itself in a way which, relatively to the normal course of things, is 'supernatural.' At the centre of the universe, the source of its order and rationality, the secret of its unity, its stability and its persistence, is a moral Personality. Thus Nature is ultimately under the control of that which transcends it, and which is free to intervene in human history when an adequate occasion demands such action. In a morally disordered universe God can work freely for its restoration, and the question which is preliminary to any investigation of the evidence for miracle is whether there be in the moral condition of humanity a *nodus vindice dignus;* and whether, in a world which is controlled by spiritual forces and tends towards a spiritual consummation it is not antecedently credible that God should use extraordinary means to remedy moral disorder and to vindicate His moral purpose.

Nature, then, is a spiritual order; it manifests in its degree the purpose and character of its

Author; it is the proper sphere of man's dominion; it serves instrumentally for the realisation of moral ends. The sphere of force and necessity is ultimately subordinate to the sphere of rational personality. Nevertheless it remains true that to the modern mind the natural is more divine than the contra-natural; for the advance of science has brought home to us more and more forcibly the reality of the divine immanence—in other words, the essential *spirituality* of the cosmic process. We have learned that the supernatural is only the truer and higher natural,[1] the restoration rather than the negation of nature, as Augustine insists.[2] Thus Christianity has inherited, though it has not always adequately or consistently maintained, the leading idea of Hebrew prophecy—that Nature is the organ of God's self-manifestation, and that its destiny is bound up with that of humanity. The tendency to spiritualise Nature was even exaggerated in the age that preceded the dawn of modern science. The material world was habitually and almost exclusively regarded as 'the fabric and manifestation of a divine power, ever free to mould it to special purposes and divert its customary ways';[3] and this tendency naturally provoked a reaction in the materialistic direction, a tendency from which science may be now said to have shaken itself free, in so far as it has come to recognise

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[1] Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 79. See generally Illingworth, *The Divine Immanence*.

[2] Aug. *de spir. et litt.* xlvii.

[3] Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, i. 127.

the spiritual principle that underlies the process of evolution.

Nature in her travail shares the *earnest expectation* of men. For her *the manifestation of the sons of God* will involve regeneration and transformation.[1] Peculiar, however, to the religion of Christ is the emphasis laid on the principle once for all established by the Incarnation—that matter has been for ever consecrated as the channel of spiritual gifts, as the veil and instrument of a spiritual presence.[2] A type and prophecy of this consummation is exhibited in the resurrection-state of Christ—a state in which the material has passed over into the spiritual; a bodily organism has become the plastic organ of spirit. There was no pre-Christian preparation for such an idea of the risen state as that implied in St. Paul's bold statement: *There is a spiritual body.*[3]

III

In one of the passages cited in the preceding paragraph the Apostle connects the deliverance for which Nature waits with the sufferings which pervade the universe, and which, to the eye of faith, are

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[1] Rom. viii. 19.

[2] Cp. Bp. Paget in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 422 foll.; Bp. Westcott, *The Incarnation a Revelation of Human Duties*, p. 9: 'By the Incarnation [God] enters through His Son into the world of nature, and delivers us from the tyranny of materialism. . . . He makes known to us the spiritual basis of life in virtue of which man in the fulness of his nature is shown to be capable of fellowship with God.'

[3] 1 Cor. xv. 44.

the birth-pangs of a new and higher order.[1] In the light of the character of God, as revealed in the redemptive work of Christ, Christianity puts a new interpretation upon the fact of pain. It is needless here to dwell particularly upon the prevalence and significance of pain in the order of physical nature. It has been repeatedly and exhaustively discussed by Christian thinkers.[2] Let it suffice to direct attention, as Augustine does in a notable passage of his *de civitate Dei*,[3] to the function discharged by suffering in the ethical universe, in relation to the development of humanity. The bible, which describes in outline the moral story of mankind, is, we know, a 'record of human sorrow.' It gives continual prominence to the fact that pain has played a conspicuous part in the discipline of character. The sufferings of the righteous are a constant theme of the Hebrew scriptures; one book at least (Job) is wholly devoted to the consideration of the problem. And the Gospel takes up the deeper teaching of the Old Testament. In the experience of Jesus Christ and of His saints it reads the lesson that the main purpose of suffering is to exalt the level of character, to develope, purify and test virtue. Nor does the Christian doctrine lack points of contact with Gentile thought. For this view of suffering is involved in the very conception of God as a

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[1] Rom. viii. 22: οἴδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις συστενάζει καὶ συνωδίνει ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν.

[2] The following may be specially mentioned: Hinton, *The Mystery of Pain*; Illingworth, *Lux Mundi*, essay 3; *Reason and Revelation*, ch. xii.; Flint, *Theism*, lect. viii.

[3] *de civ.* xxii. 22 foll.

righteous Being, governing the world and directing it to moral ends. An example may be found in the attitude of a Stoic like Seneca. In his treatise *de Providentia* he seems to escape from the traditional idea of Nature as a relentless and impersonal system, demanding man's absolute submission to passionless and unmoral law. Seneca expressly acknowledges that suffering is the divine method of perfecting character; an occasion for steadfast and courageous action; a token of the divine good will; a discipline from which none should desire to be exempt.[1] In fact, he uses language which marks a near approach to the Christian view of suffering as an effectual means of grace, making for spiritual perfection. Further, the common experience of mankind corroborates the teaching of the New Testament. Pain promotes patience, insight, tenderness of heart, unworldliness in the sufferer; it awakens latent goodness of heart in those who witness or minister to it. Accordingly, Christians are enjoined to *count it all joy* when trials overtake them; they are not to count suffering a strange or foreign thing—an alien element in their moral discipline—but a training for the state of glory.[2] Augustine even deprecates prayer for deliverance from that which, as he reminds us, may prove to be the highest of blessings; since troubles are for the most part profitable, 'either for the healing of pride, or for the proving and exercising of patience, or for the chastisement and removal of

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[1] See especially *de Prov.* iv.

[2] St. James i. 3 1 Pet. iv. 12 foll.

sin.'[1] Finally, suffering leads men to a closer and more intimate knowledge of God. It is 'God's call to make friends with Him.' It is an element in that discipline by which Wisdom draws the human heart to seek and embrace her.[2]

All this is a commonplace of moral experience. But it is sometimes forgotten that what is true of the individual applies in its measure to the nation or race. Suffering becomes a bond of union between nations, while it tends to raise the average level of national character. One leading purpose of the Old Testament is to teach us the sanctity of the natural order of the world, and to illustrate the way in which great public calamities, like pestilence, earthquake, famine, war and persecution, are at once instruments of the divine vengeance on sin and disciplinary means intended to promote the moral and spiritual welfare of mankind.

Considerations of this kind, perhaps, form our best starting-point for the contemplation of pain, as it pervades the lower orders of creation. Analogy suggests the conclusion which the Gospel seems to confirm, namely, that pain in general, and the alleged 'defects' which it was at one time fashionable to criticise in the constitution of Nature, serve good and beneficent purposes. The struggle for existence, with all the animal suffering which it necessarily involves, has obvious uses; and there is some reason for believing that its painful effects are apt to be

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[1] *epist.* cxxx. (*ad Probam*) 25. See also Illingworth, *Christian Character*, ch. 3.

[2] Wisd. vi. 17; Ecclus. ii. 5; iv. 17.

over-estimated.[1] At any rate, a confusion of thought underlies the impassioned denunciation of evolution as 'an appallingly wicked principle,' responsible for 'unspeakable wrong and prodigal waste.'[2] It is always open to question whether man's true good is a mere 'good of environment,' mere freedom from pain and struggle; it is always possible to point to tokens of 'mercy or compassion in the original constitution of the world,'[3] which, as Butler suggests, should qualify our confidence in passing hasty judgments on what we so imperfectly comprehend.

The problem of greatest difficulty, on which we naturally touch at this point, is that involved in the permission of moral evil in the universe. Now, sin is not God's work, and evil consists 'not in things themselves, but in the lawless or inordinate use of them.'[4] There is no 'evil' except such as is identical with sin or the penal consequence of it. But the permission of evil is at least consistent with the idea, so strongly reinforced by the teachings of modern science, that human life is a state of discipline and 'probation'—a word which implies an optimistic solution of the problem of evil. In this

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[1] See Wallace, *Darwinism*, ch. ii. esp. pp. 36 foll. He concludes: 'Given the necessity of death and reproduction—and without these there could have been no progressive development of the organic world—and it is difficult to imagine a system by which a greater balance of happiness could have been secured.' See also Illingworth in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 114 foll.

[2] See the *Hibbert Journal* for April, 1908, pp. 597 foll.

[3] Butler, *Analogy*, pt. 2, ch. v.

[4] Aug. *de Gen. ad lit.* i. 3: 'Non in rebus ipsis sed in usu earum non legitimo.' See the whole passage, and cp. *de ver. rel.* xliv.

idea of probation we hold a clue to the only answer that can be given to the question, *Unde malum et quare?*[1] It implies a deliberate judgment that the existence of evil serves some great moral ends; indeed, that it seems to be an absolutely essential condition of the highest types of goodness. The life and death of Jesus Christ virtually supply an answer to our inevitable questionings concerning the mystery of evil. 'The evil that is in the world is there for this reason, that the holiness, the righteousness, the spiritual and moral life, which are our only natural or supernatural completion, perfection and blessedness, cannot come into existence except through conflict with and conquest of just that particular evil of the world.'[2] The existence of evil, indeed, is a fact that cannot—at least for Christians—be isolated from that signal manifestation of God's goodness, love and wisdom which we call redemption. Evil in the universe has not been left unchallenged and unconquered. It has been made the occasion of a divine triumph, in which man may, if he will, bear his part. It has

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[1] The chapters in Butler's *Analogy* bearing on this theme 'may still be regarded as . . . the classical exposition of that one glimpse of a clue to the problem of the origin of evil which is open to those who refuse to be led . . . into some form or other of the denial that evil is evil.' Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, i. 62. Cp. H. S. Holland, *The Optimism of Butler's Analogy* (Romanes Lecture, 1908), pp. 25 foll.

[2] Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 127. Cp. Lact. *div. inst.* v. 7: 'Deus non exclusit malum ut ratio virtutis constare posset; quam Deus ut absolutam perfectamque redderet, retinuit id quod erat ei contrarium, cum quo depugnare posset.'

heightened the value and significance of that perfect act of self-sacrifice in which the incarnate Son represents and leads His brethren.

In its attitude towards evil in the universe, Christianity stands equally aloof from the optimism which minimises, and the pessimism which exaggerates, the gravity of the problem. The Christian recognises the presence of evil in the world, and the close connection which subsists between physical and moral evil. But there is a temper which is characteristically Christian—the temper which St. Paul describes as *peace in believing;*[1] the spirit that is at once thankful and hopeful—*thankful*, because the earth is *full of the goodness of the Lord*,[2] and everywhere exhibits tokens of a Being gracious and wise, who works towards the fulfilment of a purpose of love; *hopeful*, because experience is constantly teaching that evil is overruled for good, and all that seems most lawless and most hostile to the divine will ministers in the long run to its triumph.[3] This temper of thankfulness and hope is the fruit of belief in the revelation of God in Christ.

The Gospel points beyond the limits of this life to the prospect of a complete vindication of those ways of God which perplex the heart and intellect of man. It has *brought life and immortality to light;*[4]

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[1] Rom. xv. 13.

[2] Ps. xxxiii. 5.

[3] Aug. *de civ.* xxii. 2: 'Multa fiunt a malis contra voluntatem Dei; sed tantae est ille sapientiae, tantaeque virtutis, ut in eos exitus, sive fines, quos bonos et iustos ipse praescivit, tendant omnia quae voluntati eius videntur adversa.'

[4] 2 Tim. i. 10.

and since the goal, towards which the universe tends, lies beyond the range of our present faculties, it seems vain to occupy ourselves with the question why evil is so widely prevalent, so great in intensity, so frequently (at least in appearance) triumphant, so seldom completely overcome. The Christian has no temptation to ignore the facts of life, but he has learned once for all, in the central tragedy of history, their real tendency and ultimate significance. The way of sorrows has once for all been shown to be the way that leads to spiritual victory and heavenly glory. Hence the Christian is *sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; perplexed, but not in despair.*[1] Nor does he forget the limitation of his own capacities. He remembers that in attempting to judge of what seems defective or anomalous in the universe, he is passing beyond the range of his present knowledge.[2] Moreover, in a world which rejected and crucified the Son of God made man, he does not expect, nor (if he be wise) does he desire, to be exempt from suffering. He has learned in the school of Christ to 'cast aside the notion that the escape from pain and sorrow is the proper object of life.'[3] Wherever this idea takes root, life is emptied of all nobleness and power for good. The essential inferiority of Buddhism to Christianity centres in this point—that the aim of the former is the escape from pain and the

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[1] 2 Cor. iv. 8.

[2] See Butler's *Analogy*, pt. i. ch. 7; and *Serm.* xv. 'On the Ignorance of Man.'

[3] Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics* (Romanes Lecture, 1893), p. 37.

extinction of all desire for continued existence;[1] the aim of the latter is active well-doing and more abundant life.[2] The Christian philosophy of life is the fruit of an ever enlarged experience that *all things work together for good to them that love God.*[3]

[1] Cp. Bp. Copleston, *Buddhism*, ch. xv.

[2] St. John x. 10.

[3] Rom. viii. 28. On the subject discussed in the last few pages, see Pfleiderer, *Gifford Lectures* (1894), vol. i. lect. 10.

PART II

THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

CHAPTER VIII

THE PATTERN OF CHARACTER

'Cave quoquam ab exemplari tuo Christo cordis oculos dimoveas: non errabis veritatis ductum sequens, non impinges in tenebris post lumen ambulans.'—ERASMUS.

IN speaking of freedom, we touched upon the question of Christian perfection—that perfect unity of freedom and law, which is not indeed actually realised under earthly conditions, but towards which the Christian personality, aided by the grace of God, continually tends. But the process which thus culminates needs to be considered in its earlier stages; and the formation of *character* claims attention before we pass to the treatment of *duty*. It may be asked whether it is strictly logical to discuss *virtue*, that is, morality as realised in character and disposition, before dealing with *duty*, i.e. morality regarded as a demand, or a task yet to be achieved. There appear, however, to be good reasons for this procedure. Virtue we may roughly take to mean a settled aptitude or disposition for the fulfilment of duty; and it is plainly true that the fulfilment of duty in a community proceeds *pari passu* with the development of character in

individuals.[1] The knowledge of duty and the capacity to fulfil it are the reward of insight gained by the virtuous fulfilment of known tasks. But the ideal perfection of virtue has already been exhibited in Jesus Christ as 'a mind'—a way of looking at things, an attitude of will and spirit—which is characteristic of *the new man*, already *created after God in righteousness and holiness of truth.*[2] The type has already been manifested, and, what is more, has perpetuated itself, so that in every age of history since the Incarnation, Christian character has been recognised as an actually existing phenomenon; a spiritual product or creation which, when challenged, can give an account of itself; when analysed, exhibits itself as a combination of qualities 'not accidentally tied together, but united in an organic and natural connection';[3] when tested by change of environment tends always to preserve its own fixed and definite outlines, unaffected by diversities of time and circumstance. Duty, on the other hand, we think of as a moral demand which to some extent varies with the altered conditions and opportunities of each successive period in human progress. The mind of Christ, in a word, is unchanging; but the special duties of the Christian Church in each generation can only be ascertained by patient study of the peculiar needs of the time; and for the solution of each problem Christians will

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[1] Cp. Kirn, *Grundr. der Theol. Ethik*, § 34.

[2] Eph. iv. 24.

[3] R. W. Church, *The Discipline of the Christian Character*, p. 112.

require all the help that growing experience and enlarged knowledge can supply. We are thus justified in treating, first of Christian virtue and its development, and later of duty as a requirement which varies with the general conditions of civilisation in each successive stage of social evolution.

It may, then, be taken for granted that since Christianity is a life, the point of chief importance in its ethical system is the growth and development of character. This is the one end aimed at in the entire doctrinal and disciplinary system of the Church, which exists in order not merely to cherish and proclaim the characteristic *ideas* of its Founder, but to train men for *the work of ministry* in its widest sense.[1] The Church is a school of moral discipline; it aims at building up character in order through character to act as leaven upon the world of humanity. It deals directly with the moral factor which lies at the root of all true social progress. We have accordingly to consider the mode by which character is developed.

I

In the first place, it is characteristic of Christianity that it presents to men a personal pattern, a formative ideal of human nature, in the person of Jesus Christ. The gospel touches, as we have seen, upon the subject of the highest good; but it is as far as possible from teaching virtue in any

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[1] Eph. iv. 12: ἔργον διακονίας.

abstract way. Only in one or two instances does the New Testament give definitions or descriptions of particular virtues; it does not draw an imaginative picture of ideal goodness; it exhibits the thing itself, in living and actual contact with humanity. The Apostles *teach and preach Jesus Christ the righteous*, *the holy and righteous One*.[1] This method is, to some extent, recognised in non-Christian systems: in the 'philosopher king' of Plato, the 'expert' of Aristotle, the 'wise man' of the Stoics, we have an imaginary embodiment of the ideal. Seneca advises a friend to educate himself in virtue by constantly bearing in mind the example of some noble sage of the past—advice which implies that the will needs extraneous aid in the fulfilment of its task.[2] It is significant also that modern Utilitarianism acknowledges the need of expert opinion in regard to the classification of pleasures as higher or lower;[3] and a similar tendency is even apparent in the development of Comte's system: 'After long denouncing the "anthropomorphism" of other religions, he ends

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[1] Acts iv. 42. Cp. iii. 14; 1 St. John ii. 1. Cp. Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* i. 3: *Χριστὸς οὐκετι τύπους οὐδὲ εἰκόνας ἀλλ' αὐτὰς γυμνὰς ἀρετὰς καὶ βίον οὐράνιον αὐτοῖς ἀληθείας δόγμασι τοῖς θιασώταις παραδούς.*

[2] See esp. *epist.* xi. (*ad Lucilium*): 'Aliquis vir bonus eligendus est ac semper ante oculos habendus, ut sic tanquam illo spectante vivamus, et omnia tanquam illo vidente faciamus,' etc.

[3] See Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p. 15. Cp. Rashdall, *Theory of Good and Evil*, ii. p. 434: 'The complexity of the ethical end is so great that it can often be best represented by a concrete example,' etc.

with systematic adoration of actual men and women.'[1] Certainly, no adequate idea can be formed of virtues in the balanced harmony of their combination until they are seen embodied in a person; and it is part of the profound adaptation of Christianity to the actual needs of mankind that it does not define the moral ideal, but manifests the very thing itself. It proclaims Christ not only as a revelation of God, but as a supreme type of character, as the typical and representative embodiment of the kingdom of God, that is, of the unconditional reign of God in humanity. When Lactantius describes Christ as *viva praesensque lex*, he implies that the law makes no appeal to the heart until it becomes alive, so to speak, in a human character.[2] Christ, then, is the Pattern as well as the Source of the new life; mystical union with Him—outward conformity to His death and resurrection through the rite of baptism—is the initial stage in a process of which the end is inward identification with Him in will and desire, purpose and character.

II

What are the most striking elements in the pattern exhibited by our Lord?

1. First, we observe that Jesus Christ is like men, yet unlike them: like them in the general conditions

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[1] Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, i. p. 422.

[2] So Chrys. on *Phil.* iii. 17, speaks of the apostles as νόμοι ἐμψύχοι.

of His life, unlike them in His relation to the divine requirement and in the range of His spiritual influence. He *was made in the likeness of men.* He had a moral nature akin to ours, and He willed to undergo the average moral discipline of humanity. Thus *He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*[1] He knew by personal experience the pressure of temptation, the stress of exhausting toil, the spiritual trial of living in a faithless world, the perpetual need and solace of prayer. It is sometimes questioned whether Christ's example can appeal to human nature unless there be absolute identity of moral circumstances.[2] But it may be fairly replied that the circumstances of His earthly life *sufficiently resembled* those of ordinary humanity to admit of His being a suitable pattern for mankind. His life was in a real sense normal in its general conditions : passing through the ordinary stages of growth and participating in the average experience : toil and trial, success and failure, popularity and ignominy, contact with widely different types of humanity. There was the same call in His case as in ours to prayer, to patience, to endurance. There was the same demand for moral decision and renunciation. His human nature was *made perfect* by submission to the ordinary laws of spiritual

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[1] Heb. ii. 18.

[2] From the Unitarian standpoint this objection is urged by Dr. Estlin Carpenter, *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 501 : ‘ There are those to whom the doctrine [of Christ's sinlessness] is a hindrance rather than a help. A supernatural sinlessness removes the leader of their religious life out of the sphere of their own moral knowledge,' etc.

development.[1] But, further, the objection we have noticed is met by the consideration that He who presents to man the perfect example is also the Redeemer who imparts the power which enables men to become such as He was.[2] If He had *only* been revealed as the ideal of humanity, we should merely have been plunged the deeper in helplessness and despair. But as Saviour and Restorer, He becomes to those who *receive Him* the fountain-head of a new life; they attain to the fulfilment of their true possibilities in Him. Christ not merely taught men how to live; He became to them and in them a principle of supernatural life.[3] For the efficacy and the appeal of Christ's human example depend on the fact that He is *unlike* other men.[4] Man needs a sinless pattern because sinlessness is an integral element in the original truth, the creative idea, of human nature. Christ actually was that which man in general, apart from Him, fails to be, yet was *intended* to be. In Him the Father was perfectly *well pleased;* by Him the law of righteousness was completely fulfilled. Yet, notwithstanding the uniqueness of His moral relationship to God,

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[1] Christ's was 'a human holiness, identical with ours in kind, and identical with it in what we might call its natural history, or the conditions and law of its origin and growth' (Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 140).

[2] St. John i. 12.

[3] Greg. Nyss. *orat. catech.* 35: ὁ τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν τρόπος οὐ τοσοῦτον ἐκ τῆς κατὰ διδαχὴν ὑφηγήσεως ἐνεργὸς γέγονεν ὅσον δι' αὐτῶν ὧν ἐποίησεν ὁ τὴν πρὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον ὑποστὰς κοινωνίαν, ἔργῳ τὴν ζώην ἐνεργήσας.

[4] Athanasius, *orat. c. Arian.* iii. 20: ἡμῶν μὲν οὖν ἀνόμοιος ὁ Λόγος, τοῦ δὲ Πατρὸς ὅμοιος.

He is so vitally akin to us in nature that He can have fellow-feeling with the struggling and imperfect. *He can bear gently with the ignorant, and them that are out of the way.*[1] At the same time, as *a life-giving spirit*,[2] He communicates to His brethren the power by which He Himself won the victory over sin; the power which belongs to Him as the true Head of our race and as the Restorer of our nature.

2. The example of Jesus Christ is also of universal import. He is the 'Son of Man,' in whom there is nothing merely local or transient, national or sectarian. As Irenaeus repeatedly expresses it, Christ 'recapitulates' in Himself the nature of man; He comprises it in Himself as its ideal representative; He restores it in His own person to its original integrity and purity; He carries it triumphantly to the fulfilment of its true destiny.[3] Hence the outstanding feature of His character is *universality*. In spite of all diversities of race, locality, age and civilisation, every type of human nature may find in Him its appropriate ideal. Since He belongs to all time, each generation may see reflected in Him its peculiar gifts and excellences. His character bears the mark of finality, because it is 'the absolute embodiment of love.'[4] And while

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[1] Heb. v. 2.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 45.

[3] Iren. iii. 16. 6; 18. 1, 7; 21. 10; 22. 2, 3; v. 23. 2, etc. Cp. Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, 17: 'Jesus embodies and expresses to humanity the truth of itself; the truth, beauty, and goodness of itself.'

[4] See the passage from a lecture of Mr. Goldwin Smith, printed

there will always be those who endeavour literally to imitate Christ in the exterior conditions of His life, to the mass of believing Christians the thought of Christ as He *now is* will bring more potent inspiration than the bare memory of *what He was*. For a Christian, rightly so named, is one who seeks to carry Christ's mind and spirit into all the complex tasks and trials of actual life. To obey Him as a living Lord, to lean on Him as an ever-present Saviour, to be inspired and guided by His Spirit amid all the varying conditions of earthly experience—this is to be a follower of Christ in a world which He has redeemed and hallowed, and which is destined to witness the triumph of His kingdom.

3. The example of Christ is universal in its scope; and this suggests the further inquiry, What is the dominant characteristic of the divine-human life? The answer is that it is a life consecrated to the service of humanity, but rooted in and sustained by filial communion with God. Christ exhibits a new power upon earth—a power that acts as a regenerating and transforming influence in human life; a power which pours itself out in active sympathy, but is at the same time derived from God, and sustained by unbroken intercourse with Him. The servant of humanity is the Son of God. He stands in a relationship to God, which is ideal and typical; a relationship not merely of nature, but of perfect moral affinity. He embodies in Himself that very spirit of filial dependence, obedience

as note vii. in Westcott's *Historic Faith*, pp. 231 foll. Cp. R. W. Church, *Gifts of Civilisation*, serm. 3, 'Christ's Example.'

and devotion, which is the appropriate ideal of humanity. He showed alike in His works and in His doctrine that the divine Fatherhood is the basis of all human duty and service; that 'duty is but the habit of the filial spirit.'[1] In perfect union with God, in absolute dependence upon Him, Christ fulfilled on earth the will of God. *I came not*, He says, *to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.*[2] We recognise at once, in these and similar passages, the really *distinctive* thing in Christ's example, and in the Christian conception of goodness.[3] It has been pointed out elsewhere how the filial temper in man exalts and stimulates character and quickens spiritual insight; how it brings him into rich and satisfying relations with all that God has made and into vital harmony with the purpose that guides the universe.[4] Let it suffice here to say briefly that in so far as he realises his sonship, man arrives at his rightful position in creation; he identifies himself with the 'living will,' the principle of love, which binds all things in one

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[1] See Fairbairn, *Christ in Mod. Theology*, pp. 447, 448: 'The Sonship He realised is the ideal of the race. All God was to Him, He was meant to be and wants to be to every man; all He was to God, every man ought to be and may become. The very reason of His being was to exhibit, through the ideal relation of man to God, the actual relation of God to man.' . . . 'Duty is but the habit of the filial spirit; and it is possible and incumbent on all men, because all are sons.'

[2] St. John vi. 38; v. 19.

[3] Cp. R. H. Hutton's essay on *The Incarnation and Principles of Evidence* (*Theol. Essays*, no. viii.).

[4] Cp. *Lux Mundi*, p. 492 foll.

and bears them onward to their appointed goal. He finds his highest and most congenial sphere of action in the service of his fellows and his rest in communion with God. And to be thus occupied, thus minded, is to share the very spirit of the incarnate Son; it is to participate in His victory over the world, His reign over nature, His repose in God.[1]

4. We may consider lastly how Christ exhibits in harmonious combination various contrasted types of moral excellence. In His character there is nothing that can fairly be described as one-sided; there is nothing that disturbs a perfect equilibrium. In our experience of average human nature we are familiar with a certain lack of proportion or harmony, due partly to the distorting influence of sin, partly to the inevitable limitations which hamper or obscure even the noblest mental and spiritual endowments. Average human life exhibits only the *disjecta membra* of spiritual perfection. The imperfections of good men are a byword. They have, as we say, 'the defects of their qualities': zeal without discretion; ardour without tenderness; self-sacrifice without sympathy; a sense of justice without compassion; a high standard of honour or veracity without humility; and so on. But in Jesus Christ, all contrasts are blended and harmonised. It has often been remarked, for instance, that He

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[1] Erasmus, *Enchiridion*, x. 59 c.: 'Ad hoc tantum creatus es, in hoc redemptus, ut summo illo bono semper fruaris: totam vero hanc mundi machinam fabricatus est Deus ut omnia tuis servirent usibus.'

combines the leading features both of masculine and of feminine excellence. He unites plenitude of moral and spiritual force with infinite passivity, gentleness and loyalty. He is at once the lion and the lamb[1]—ardent, yet meek; consumed by the passion for righteousness, yet serenely bearing with human error and infirmity;[2] in the deepest and fullest sense 'heroic,' yet ever compassionate to weakness and ignorance. This view of Christ, indeed, as uniting the types of manly and womanly virtue may be expanded so as to embrace other aspects of His character.

Thus we may note that the life of Christ combines in due proportion the elements of *repose* and *activity;* self-forgetful toil is sanctified and filled with power by the spirit of prayer. Christ is seen to be in the closest contact with the actual needs of humanity —ever engaged in the relief of suffering, and in ministries of love; *semper agens*, but at the same time *semper quietus.* He passes from one task to another, from mountain-side to plain or shore, from synagogue to street, from city to village; moving among men, and bringing wherever He comes the atmosphere of heaven; looking *round about upon all things*[3] with the deep circumspection of One who knows what is in man.

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[1] Rev. v. 5, 6. See Milligan, *The Book of Revelation* (Expositor's Bible), p. 79.

[2] See the commentaries on the beautiful word μετριοπαθεῖν, Heb. v. 2.

[3] St. Mark xi. 11; cp. St. John ii. 25. On the combination of activity with repose and prayerfulness in Christ, see Moberly,

Again, the most conspicuous trait in Christ is the possession of *power;* He exhibits the force of a unique and commanding personality; He teaches with authority; *His word was with power.*[1] We watch Him in His conflict with the Pharisees, driving the throng of traders from the temple-courts, swaying the multitudes, 'constraining' His disciples to depart and leave Him in solitude. We see manifested in Him moral power at its height: spiritual insight, penetration into the motives and designs of others, mastery over the spirits of evil; yet all this combined with the temper of dependence, with unwearying patience and persistent self-restraint. Men have marvelled at the 'law of parsimony' which controls His display of miraculous power.[2] He employs His wonder-working energy always and only for spiritual ends, for the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom; never to gratify unthinking curiosity, nor to gain any personal advantage. In the same way, He combines an infinite meekness and lowliness with self-assertion. He claims to stand in a unique relation to the soul of man as its Master, Pattern, Absolver, Saviour and Judge; He bids the weary and heavy-laden come unto Him; yet in word and in deed, in the proclamation of truth and in the sufferance of wrong, He exhibits the perfection of humility. We must not, however, forget that in both relationships to

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The Atonement and Personality, pp. 101 foll. and p. 315; also Robinson, *Human Nature a Revelation of the Divine*, ch. v.

[1] St. Matt. vii. 29; St. Luke iv. 32.

[2] Cp. *Ecce Homo* (ed. 13), p. 45.

mankind—in the authoritative majesty of His claim, in the lowliness of His service—He displays *power*. For even the meekness of Christ implies the restraint and reserve of power—the power that could, but would not, sweep aside all obstacles and crush all opposition. It is, indeed, peculiar to Christianity that it regards forbearance and long-suffering as forms, not of weakness, but of strength.[1] The grace of patience is transfigured by the Cross, and is proved to be no merely passive virtue, but the highest exercise of power. In His sacred passion the Redeemer exhibits the steadfastness of an unswerving will under the pressure of extreme trial. He is *crucified through weakness;* but the Cross is the instrument and symbol of His victory over the powers of evil.[2] On it He accomplishes, under conditions of inconceivable difficulty and distress, His redemptive work. The very sufferings of Christ are, in fact, triumphs of love and might;[3] the humiliation of the passion is an essential stage in the *glorification* of the Redeemer.[4]

Another feature of Christ's character is the union in it of universal love to mankind with discriminating care for individuals. He came into the world to establish an all-embracing kingdom of humanity, but He never wearied in His pastoral

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[1] Cp. Col. i. 11.

[2] Col. ii. 14, 15.

[3] Cp. Hilary, *de Trin.* x. 48; Greg. Nyss. *orat. cat.* 24.

[4] Cp. St. John xii. 23, 28, 32; xiii. 31; xvii. 1, 5. 'The glory of which John speaks is that of Divine grace revealed in word, deed, and *suffering*, to the eye of faith' (Bruce, *The Humiliation of Christ*, p. 35).

care for individuals. He 'received' sinners, and did not disdain to be accounted their 'friend.' With His eye on a far-distant future, He deliberately prepared and trained the men who were to be the foundation-stones of the catholic society; but at the same time, He concentrated His attention on individual men and women; He dealt with them singly, as if no other for the time claimed His care. At the outset of His ministry He found opportunity to spend a whole day with two inquirers; He devoted a night to Nicodemus; He lodged with Zacchaeus; He conversed with the Samaritan woman; He ministered in His dying hour to the penitent robber, and provided for the loneliness of His mother. It is in this pastoral tenderness for individuals that He manifests the abounding grace of *the Good Shepherd*, who leaves the ninety and nine sheep in order to seek the one that has gone astray. Yet with this discriminating insight into the spiritual needs and sorrows of individual men and women, Christ combines a comprehensive outlook upon human life which moves Him to work for the realisation of distant ideals. The vision which inspires His work for mankind is that of a world-wide kingdom—a kingdom in which the peculiar gifts of races and nations shall find their consecration, in which the most comprehensive ideals of human perfection shall find their fulfilment.[1]

We may express the same truth otherwise by remarking how Christ combines boundless sympathy

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[1] Cp. Rev. xxi. 24, 26, and Swete *ad loc.* See also Martensen, *Christian Ethics* (general), p. 252 [E.T.].

and self-communicativeness with spiritual solitude. He lives among men, and makes Himself one of them; He enters into their joys and sorrows and needs, but He does not *commit Himself* to any man.[1] He moves apart, sinless in a sin-stricken world; solitary in the possession of an incommunicable secret, in the consciousness of a mission which none can share or fully comprehend. And He derives His strength for ministry or for conflict not from the companionship of His fellow-men, but from habitual communion with His Father. In lonely hours of prayer, in solitary places, He recruits His exhausted energies, fortifies Himself for fresh tasks and finds relief for His burdened heart—oppressed by the faithlessness, the blindness, the hardness of heart which hold men back from Him, or thwart His effort to help and uplift them. Yet His solitariness of spirit is not that of a mere visionary or of a misanthrope. With all His penetrating insight into the many *things that offend* in the world of His day, He is no pessimist. He knows, indeed, the inner significance and the inevitable issues of sin; He speaks with sorrowful severity of the *evil generation* amid which His earthly lot is cast; He exposes the worthlessness and hollowness of much on which it vainly prides itself; He predicts its inevitable doom. But with this melancholy view of the world He combines a divine insight into the latent capacities of men, nor does He despair of the redemption of even the most sinful and degraded.[2] He discerns 'the soul of good in things evil.'

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[1] St. John ii. 24.

[2] Cp. Robinson, *op. cit.* pp. 7, 11.

He not only recognises goodness; He *elicits* it. The *Light of the world* at once attracts and kindles hearts. 'The holy light of human goodness,' it has been said, 'irradiates every page of the Gospel until we half forget that we are reading of a period when the iniquity of the Hebrew race was now full.'[1]

The train of thought indicated above might be, and has often been, extended. Enough, however, has been said to illustrate the way in which the example of Christ is adapted to the moral needs of every race and every type of humanity. By way of summary, it may be repeated that Christianity does not introduce a new law, but substitutes for it a life, a personality, in which the law of righteousness is perfectly embodied and represented. In His relationship to God and to mankind, in His attitude towards life and its problems, in His submission to the common lot of humanity, in His antagonism to evil, in His testimony to truth, in His acceptance of suffering and death, the Redeemer exhibited a certain type of character, which the New Testament describes as 'the mind' of Christ. All growth in character thus depends upon the effort to imitate a living Person, and to study a living mind. As Augustine says, in a comprehensive sentence: 'All things, the passion for which led us into sin, He showed to be insignificant by foregoing them; all evils which we were so anxious to avoid that we strayed from the pursuit of truth, He overcame by enduring them. Thus the whole of His earthly life

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[1] J. Burgon, *The Pastoral Office*, p. 432.

in the human nature which He deigned to assume, was a schooling in character.'[1]

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[1] *de vera rel.* xvi.: 'Omnia quae habere cupientes non recte vivebamus, carendo vilefecit; omnia quae vitare cupientes a studio deviabamus veritatis, perpetiendo deiecit . . . Tota itaque vita ejus in terris per hominem quem suscipere dignatus est, disciplina morum fuit.'

CHAPTER IX

PRIMARY CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

'Magna pars Christianismi est toto pectore velle fieri Christianum.'—ERASMUS.

It is no necessary part of our present inquiry to dwell upon those material and social conditions which directly and obviously *war against the soul* by impeding or perverting the growth of character. No one will deny that there are external circumstances which practically preclude the very possibility of a virtuous life; sometimes by absorbing men's energies in the struggle for bare subsistence, sometimes by producing an environment in which elementary moral instincts are outraged or crushed. We are concerned simply with the truth which our Lord enforces in the parable of the sower: the truth that character, in the Christian sense, implies the living growth of a seed, or principle, imparted from above; and that there are conditions which retard or encourage its development. The same truth is implied in St. John's statement: *To as many as received him gave he power to become children of God.*[1] The foundation of the filial relationship to God and of the character which

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[1] St. John i. 12.

corresponds to it is laid in a certain attitude or disposition of the soul which meets and co-operates with the divine gift. Thus, generally speaking, the growth of character depends upon the following chief conditions.

1. *Teachableness*, or receptivity. The one fatal obstacle to spiritual progress is self-satisfaction—the absence of the sense of need. Now the type of goodness which our Lord found in possession of the field, so to speak, was that of Pharisaism. The Pharisee, speaking broadly, looked on righteousness as a matter of attainment. The habit of his mind was to identify morality with *law*, written or traditional. Hence there was a tendency in Pharisaism to limit the sphere of morality to overt action.[1] Further, the idea of 'merit' became deeply ingrained in the Jewish mind; a satisfying consciousness of loyalty to truth and righteousness, which was in part the outcome of centuries of heathen oppression. It would be a mistake to overrate the effects of legalism on the current conceptions of sin. But it is perhaps well within the truth to say that the more spiritual doctrine of sin which appears in parts of the Psalter, and to some extent in the 'Wisdom' literature—the view which traces sin to its root in impulses and inclinations of the will—was obscured in the practical system of the later Judaism.[2] This

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[1] Cp. Schürer, *Hist. of the Jewish People, etc.* § 28 (div. 2, vol. ii. pp. 90 foll. [E.T.]).

[2] See Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, no. ix.: 'The Law and its Influence.'

fact in a measure explains the severe and unhopeful tone of Christ's references to the religion of the Pharisees. He *came*, as He said, *not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*[1] He looked for the sense of need and shortcoming; for the temper of aspiration and receptiveness. In His eyes the consciousness of personal failure and weakness was the first step towards the attainment of the true righteousness. This was the real point of our Lord's call to conversion. He bade men seek the satisfaction of their needs, the healing of their moral diseases, in God. The type of character necessary for effectual entrance into the kingdom was that of the child: 'poverty of spirit,' the consciousness of ignorance and dependence, the absence of self-assertion, susceptibility to influence and guidance from above. The temper which accepts the blessings of the kingdom is depicted in the Beatitudes, of which the first three describe the *negative* aspects of the Christian character; *Blessed are the poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek.* With these maxims Christ confronts those notions of good and goodness which in all ages are apt to be the ideals of civilised man—self-assertion, the pursuit of comfort, avoidance of pain, personal independence. The Beatitudes imply that the kingdom of heaven is the divine response to a profound *want* in humanity. Its blessings belong by right to him who has realised the essential poverty of his unassisted nature, the weakness of his will and its vital need

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[1] St. Matt. ix. 13.

of discipline and guidance.[1] And this primary requirement of the Gospel falls in with the importance which it always assigns to repentance and a new birth. The open-eyed recognition and abandonment of sin lies at the very threshold of the new life, and all further advance depends upon the extent to which the consciousness of shortcoming, or at least of dependence, is kept alive. The moral life is, in fact, a process of discovery, a process (as the Hebrew described it) of 'seeking God.' It implies an infinite sense of need on the part of man, a thirst that is never perfectly quenched, a desire that is never finally satisfied in this life. 'Towards an infinite spirit,' writes Prof. T. H. Green, 'the attitude of man at his highest and completest could still be only that which we have described as self-abasement before an ideal of holiness; . . . the same attitude of awe and aspiration which belongs to all the upward stages of the moral life.'[2] Some moral philosophers have dwelt with unction on 'the pleasing consciousness and self-approbation' which soothe the breast of the virtuous man, forgetful of the fact that conscience tends to become more sensitive in proportion to moral growth, and that in his highest moments a good man is most keenly aware that the real agent is the grace of God working with him and in him.[3] A typical Christian utterance

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[1] See Illingworth, *Christian Character*, pp. 25, 26. Cp. the maxim of Epicurus, quoted by Seneca (*Epist.* xxviii.): 'Initium est salutis notitia peccati.'

[2] *Prolegomena to Ethics*, bk. ix. ch. i. § 302.

[3] 1 Cor. xv. 10.

is that of Ignatius on his way to martyrdom: 'Now I begin to be a disciple.' The consciousness of personal sinfulness seems, indeed, to undergo transformation as age advances. The emotional sense of guilt and unworthiness which usually accompanies the crisis of a first conversion yields gradually to the abiding temper of humility. A sense of continual dependence and incompleteness, a calm but not unhopeful acceptance of our limitations, a consciousness of a spiritual purpose at work in the world with which we are called to co-operate —this is, perhaps, the temper generally characteristic of the mature Christian. We enter more fully into the whole condition of the world about us, and in so doing lose to a great extent the haunting consciousness of personal unworthiness. It is no longer 'sin in the abstract or personal sinfulness with which we have chiefly to do, but evil in the concrete, the bad life and the suffering life that we may make better and happier.'[1] Thus the apparent decline of the consciousness of sin may actually mean growth in the sense of responsibility; in a real sense 'a lower form of conscientiousness gives place to a higher.'[2]

2. Without the sense of dependence and its consequence, the receptive or teachable habit of mind, the very foundation of the Christian character cannot be laid. Another necessary condition of

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[1] G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, ch. xii.: 'The Consciousness of Sin,' p. 398. Cp. W. Inge, *Truth and Falsehood in Religion*, p. 87.

[2] Coe, *op. cit.* p. 379.

moral growth is *probation.* Character is developed by the process of overcoming hindrances, and these are partly *interior*, arising from temperament, heredity, constitutional tendencies and the like; partly *exterior*, resulting from a man's personal reaction upon the moral environment in which he finds himself placed. The existence of these hindrances involves the possibility of temptation; or rather, as Bishop Butler points out, 'temptations from within and from without coincide and mutually imply each other.'[1] And it is a commonplace of ethics that character implies the formation of habits, and habits are the product of a continuous discipline of the will. The profound analysis of temptation in the Epistle of St. James[2] shows that temptation has its root in the man himself. He is tempted to sin by his own desire. The question at issue for each is whether he will identify *himself* with the wrong impulse—whether he will deliberately choose what his reason and conscience forbid, for the sake of the pleasure involved in the gratification of his desire.[3] When the will—the 'basal self'—thus identifies itself with the impulse, the product is sin (*τίκτει ἁμαρτίαν*), and the habit that results from frequent repetition of the sinful act is 'sin full-grown' (*ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα*). On the other hand, if the will identifies itself with the dictates of conscience and reason, its victory in the struggle with

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[1] *Analogy*, pt. i. ch. iv.

[2] St. James i. 13–15.

[3] Arist. *Eth. Nic.* ii. 3. 1: *δι' ἡδονὴν τὰ φαῦλα πράττομεν καὶ διὰ λύπην τῶν καλῶν ἀπεχόμεθα.*

temptation lays the foundation of a habit which is perfected by patience, and becomes an element of fixity and stability in the character.[1]

For ordinary men common life is adapted to be the very state of trial, and to supply the very element of discipline, which character needs. Men have no need to swerve from the beaten track to seek for the trials that will test and develope virtue. The fulfilment of every-day duties and obligations will, in any state of life, involve the probation which ministers to moral growth. Temptations, of course, vary with differences of temperament, age, and experience. Not infrequently they are the penal consequences of earlier misdoing. And the divinely taught prayer for deliverance from temptation is the expression of a right diffidence and self-distrust; it is perfectly consistent with the spirit of dependence and prayerfulness which has the sure promise of victory. Nevertheless, temptation is a discipline which the Christian cannot hope or wish to evade altogether; and, speaking generally, the growth of character depends not on escaping from our surroundings, but on energetic use of the actual conditions in which we are placed. In any sphere of life there will be scope for the exercise of prudence and self-control; for persistence in the fulfilment of duty, sometimes under circumstances of formidable difficulty and discouragement. A loyal Christian will be continually striving for mastery—mastery, first, of himself; secondly, of the

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[1] *i.e.* the state in which the agent acts εἰδώς, προαιρούμενος δι' αὐτά, βεβαίως καὶ ἀμετακινήτως ἔχων (Arist. *Eth. Nic.* ii. 4).

conditions of life in which he finds himself placed. From this point of view the purely ascetic ideal of life is open to criticism. In so far as it implies mere *Welt-flucht*—mere endeavour to escape from temptation—it cannot be said to strengthen individuality. On the contrary, experience shows that it tends to a certain feebleness or childishness of character — what Milton calls 'a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed.' The evasion of responsibilities involves a positive falling short of that full-grown and many-sided perfection which is the result aimed at by Christian ethics.[1]

3. Probation implies a constantly recurring necessity for moral *decision*. The main obstacle to the growth of character is indecision, the double mind, the attempt to *serve God and mammon*. Hence our Lord invariably calls upon men to *act*: 'Follow Me.' 'Go and do thou likewise.' 'Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor.' He appeals not to emotion or to intellect, but to the *will*. He declares that obedience is the secret of spiritual discernment.[2] Something has already been said as to this characteristic of our Lord's teaching. The chief defect of the legal religion of the Pharisee was a certain intellectualism; an excessive deference to learning, especially of the Rabbinical type.[3] We are familiar with a somewhat similar tendency in

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[1] Col. i. 28, πάντα ἄνθρωπον τέλειον. See on this subject Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, i. 298; H. Black, *Culture and Restraint*, ch. vii., to whom I owe the reference to Milton's *Areopagitica*.

[2] St. John vii. 17.

[3] Cp. Sanday, *Outlines of the Life of Christ*, p. 15.

Greek ethics to identify virtue with knowledge. Ethical ideals were apt to appear remote from actual life, and had little or no direct relation to conduct.[1] Christian discipleship, on the other hand, begins in ethical decision. *Whosoever shall do the will of God* is welcomed by Christ as spiritually akin to Himself.[2] The act of faith is, in fact, essentially a movement of the will; it is moral adhesion to an ideal of truth and goodness. Repentance and conversion, again, are definite movements of the will; and it is by repeated acts of moral choice that the Christian 'abides' in Christ, or rather by the steadfast tenacity of a will which yields to no allurement, and persists in spite of adverse pressure.

In the development of character the most valuable element is not what is done for a man, but what he does for himself. The redemptive work of Christ makes possible the attainment by personality of its true ideal. He lived and suffered and died, not to exempt us from conflict, pain and struggle, but in order that we might be enabled in His strength to do and to bear all that may be involved in the fulfilment of God's purpose for us. Man is called to co-operate with the divine grace, and so to work out his own salvation.[3] This is a topic which will be considered later. Meanwhile it must suffice to emphasise the supreme importance of the part played by the will in spiritual progress. The will dedicating itself to goodness, or rather devoting itself to God, carries with it all human

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[1] Strong, *Christian Ethics*, p. 11.

[2] St. Mark iii. 35.

[3] Phil. ii. 12.

faculties—thought, affection, imagination, bodily gifts and powers. The problem of character is solved by the Gospel just because it reveals the only forces which can effectually act upon the will.

What has been said practically amounts to this: that the first stage in the development of Christian character is one of receptivity. The life of grace begins in meekness—in docile self-surrender to the moral authority of Christ. And this self-surrender, when it is a conscious act of the soul, is usually followed by struggle and trial, involving a real probation and a continual demand for new efforts of the will. The results of the modern study of religious psychology seem to corroborate this fact. Experience shows that conversion is, in most cases, the beginning of a period of spiritual conflict and distress, which assumes different forms in individual cases. The struggle with old habits begins in earnest; the soul is shaken by storms of doubt and despondency; the life, both of intellect and of emotion, is wakened to new and intense activity; the personality becomes conscious of itself—of its own worth and of its place and function in the world. The old self is gradually brought face to face with the claims of the community; it recognises for the first time its own possibilities, its present incompleteness, its responsibility as a member of human society. 'Conversion' is, in fact, the birth of the soul into a 'larger life,' and its uplifting to a higher level of spiritual consciousness.[1] In this process are

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[1] On this subject see E. D. Starbruck, *The Psychology of Religion*, chh. x., xi.

involved all the elements of conflict and trial; the soul becomes aware of a discordance between a lower and higher self, and of its need of a power that can reinforce and sustain the will in its perilous struggle. This is the point at which St. Paul arrives when, in his account of his inward conflict, he names his spiritual Deliverer.[1] The spirit of submissiveness and teachableness, which begins by putting itself to school with the teaching of Christ, renews itself in a passionate self-surrender to Him who alone can strengthen the disciple for conflict, and impart to him the secret of spiritual victory.

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[1] Rom. vii. 25.

CHAPTER X

THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER IN ITS SELF-MANIFESTATION

'Charitas inchoata, inchoata iustitia est; charitas provecta, provecta iustitia est; charitas magna, magna iustitia est; charitas perfecta, perfecta iustitia est.'—AUGUSTINE.

THE Christian character grows out of the relationships in which the Christian is placed. By baptism he is incorporated into Christ; 'in Christ' he becomes a 'new creature'; he enters into the privileges and responsibilities of divine sonship, and, what is equally important, he becomes a member of a *body*—one of 'many brethren' all enlisted in one service, all bound to each other by ties of mutual obligation and service. This is obviously the ground of the entirely social character of Christian morality, as implied, for instance, in such a passage as the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Faith is a social act—a profession that directly implies adhesion to a society; as Augustine says, 'We repeat the belief which we bear in our hearts *ad salutem proximorum nitentes*.'[1] 'The act of faith . . . has already within it the character of the citizen of heaven.'[2] Finally, the Christian stands,

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[1] *de fid. et symb.* i.

[2] Holland, *On Behalf of Belief*, p. 107.

as it were, in closest relationship to the new self, the new nature, which is his 'in Christ'; and for him, too, the world wears a changed aspect. Christ has made *all things new*, and the Christian looks on nature, on human civilisation and its characteristic gifts, with new interest and from a changed standpoint. In its spiritual aspect, the world is an enemy to be 'overcome';[1] in its material aspect, it may be subservient to the development and enrichment of the moral life: it is to be 'used,' and not 'abused.'[2]

It has already been pointed out that man is brought into his true relationship to God by the act of God Himself.[3] The three 'theological virtues' are plainly the characteristic graces of sonship. He in whom the essential spirit of sonship was manifested is the perfect pattern of faith, hope and love; and the root of Christian virtue is the *Godward* direction of the regenerate personality; in union with Christ it finds in God the supreme Object of its trust, its hope, its love; and in this spirit of dependence it finds its liberty, it wins its victory over the world.

In approaching the subject of character, it is well to emphasise the distinction already touched upon between the ideas of *virtue* and *duty*, each of which it is the task of ethics to investigate.

Broadly speaking, virtue is a permanent habit or condition of personality appropriate to the relationships in which it stands, and the moral functions it

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[1] 1 St. John v. 4; cp. St. John xvi. 33.

[2] 1 Cor. vii. 31.

[3] See Chap. VI.

I

In Christian ethics, the doctrine of virtue tends to become a doctrine of *character*. Early Christian writers, in fact, seem instinctively to avoid the use of the word 'virtue.' The honoured heathen term for 'moral excellence' conveyed no suggestion of a goodness essentially supernatural both in its origin and in its comprehensiveness.[1] The idea of *perfection* as relatively attainable even within the limits of a human life; the idea of character as an essential unity, combining many different elements in due harmony and proportion,—these are peculiarly characteristic of the ethics of the New Testament. Hence, in their descriptions of the Christ-like character, the apostolic writers trace an entire group of virtues to a single source. Thus St. Paul depicts in a well-known passage, *the fruit of the Spirit;* in another he speaks of love as *the bond of perfectness.*[2] St. James describes different aspects of *the wisdom that is from above.*[3] The writer of the Second Epistle of Peter represents faith as the foundation of a complete series of closely related virtues.[4] The idea underlying each of these different statements is that all virtue implies and issues from a right relationship to God, and in Him to humanity at large.

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[1] Cp. Trench, *Synonyms of the N. T.* § vi. In the same way the New Testament writers avoid the word εὐδαιμονία.

[2] Gal. v. 22, 23; Col. iii. 14.

[3] St. James iii. 17. Cp. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* vi. 13. 6: ἅμα τῃ φρονήσει μιᾷ οὔσῃ πᾶσαι ὑπάρξουσιν (*sc.* αἱ ἀρεταί).

[4] 2 Pet. i. 5 foll.

In the right direction of personality, all virtue is *potentially* present. The good will is the common ground of every separate excellence.[1]

II

We have now to consider more particularly the fourfold relationship in which a moral being finds himself placed—(1) to God, (2) to his neighbour, (3) to himself, (4) to the external world.

1. The distinctive element in Christian experience is the consciousness of a filial relationship to God. The fact that God reveals Himself in Christ as 'Father,' suggests a standard of character at which man is called to aim.[2] The very name is an incentive to love, to confidence, to aspiration.[3] It is a pledge that there is a meaning in human suffering, a spiritual purpose underlying the infinite diversity of human work and experience. Accordingly, a prominent note of the Christian's character is *unworldliness;* a sense that his vocation is 'heavenly,' that he is made for something greater and better than the so-called 'prizes of life' which are so eagerly sought by average humanity. But the Christian is not so much 'detached' *from* the world as devoted

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[1] See Green, *ubi sup.* p. 307.

[2] Petr. Chrys. *in orat. Dom.* 2: 'Qui se filium Dei credit actu, vita, moribus, honestate tanto generi respondeat.'

[3] Aug. *de serm. Dom. in monte*, ii. 4. 16: 'Quo nomine et charitas excitatur et supplex affectus et quaedam impetrandi praesumptio quae petituri sumus.'

to God.[1] He is habitually mindful of the divine presence and of the spiritual purpose which lie behind the claims of duty. Hence he endeavours to do all things *as unto the Lord*, with the sole desire of pleasing and serving Him. The goodness at which he aims is that which will bear the searching light of the divine scrutiny.[2] St. Paul, indeed, speaks as if holiness of life consisted simply in the effort always and everywhere to 'please God.'[3] 'Devotion,' writes Bishop Butler, in a noble passage of his *Sermons*, 'is retirement from the world He has made, to Him alone: it is to withdraw from the avocations of sense, to employ our attentions wholly upon Him as upon an object actually present, to yield ourselves up to the influence of the divine presence, and to give full scope to the affections of gratitude, love, reverence, trust and dependence; of which infinite power, wisdom, and goodness is the natural and only adequate object.' This is the temper of mind respecting God which is 'particularly suitable to a state of imperfection; to creatures in a progress of being towards somewhat further.'[4] In fact, nothing is more characteristic of the Christian temper than the habitual sense of a divine

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[1] Aug. *de vera rel.* xxxv.: 'Unum certe quaerimus quo simplicius nihil est. . . . Ergo in simplicitate cordis quaeramus illum.' And Bishop Wilson thus begins his *Sacra Privata*: 'True devotion consists in having our hearts always devoted to God, as the sole Fountain of all happiness.'

[2] 2 Cor. v. 9; Eph. i. 4.

[3] Rom. viii. 8; 1 Cor. vii. 32; 1 Thess. iv. 1.

[4] *Sermons*, No. xiv., 'Upon the Love of God,' § 6 [ed. Bernard]. See also Green, *Prolegomena*, §§ 301, 302.

presence — a sense which intensifies feeling and aspiration, while it imparts a sacred significance to the ordinary experiences of life.[1]

Hence is derived that singleness of mind, the 'single eye,' on which our Lord lays so much stress. We may follow Augustine in identifying 'singleness' with 'purity' of heart. Human nature is single (or 'simple') when it finds in God alone the perfect satisfaction of its desires and the supreme Object of its moral endeavours.[2] In thus directing itself towards a single object, the personality approaches the concentrated and harmonious operation of the divine life. For God is *ens simplicissimum*, and the act of turning to Him means the recovery of simplicity; it means singleness of purpose in all action; it implies a consciousness that in the right fulfilment of our personal relationship to God all other duties are included.[3] Thus the New Testament unreservedly adopts the familiar Old Testament

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[1] Aug. *de spir. et litt.* lxvi. describes the good Christian as one who 'in such wise recognises everywhere the presence of God as the saints hereafter shall recognise Him.' Cp. Bern. *in Cant.* lxix. 1: 'Animam nihil amantem praeter Deum et quod propter Deum amandum est . . . cui studii et otii sit providere Dominum in conspectu suo semper,' etc.

[2] Aug. *in serm. Dom. in monte*, i. 8: 'Hoc est mundum cor quod est simplex cor;' ii. 19. 63: 'Vult [Deus] ut simplici corde et in unum Deum intento faciamus quaecunque faciamus,' etc. See also ii. 1 for a similar passage. In *Confess.* ii. 1, Augustine speaks of his conversion as a recovery of simplicity: 'Colligens me a dispersione in qua frustra discissus sum, dum ab uno Te aversus in multa evanui.'

[3] Bern. *de grat. et lib. arb.* 6. 19: 'Est autem *ordinatio omnimoda* conversio cordis ad Deum et ex tota se voluntaria devotaque subjectio.'

title, 'servant of God.' The end of the redeemed life is service; but the due performance of certain rites or actions, which is the moral characteristic of primitive religion, gives way to the idea of discharging the obligations of love involved in a personal relationship.[1] Christians are not merely 'servants to righteousness,' bound, that is, to fulfil the true law of their nature; they are called to embrace and co-operate with a living will; in being servants to righteousness they *become servants to God.*[2]

The passage of St. Paul just alluded to suggests the further inquiry, What is the Christian *motive?* and what is the relation of moral action to the notion of *reward?* These questions, in fact, present two aspects of a single problem. It seems to follow, from what has been said, that there is only one entirely praiseworthy *motive,* namely, devotion to and desire for the highest kind of good; but since God is Himself the supreme Good and wills the highest good of His creatures, devotion to good means nothing more nor less than love to God—a love kindled not only by the contemplation of His perfections, but by grateful recollection of all that He has wrought in order to enable His creatures to fulfil the law of their being. *We love*

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[1] Heb. ix. 14: *λατρεύειν Θεῷ ζῶντι*; 1 Thess. i. 9: *δουλεύειν Θεῷ*. Cp. St. Matt. vi. 24; 1 Pet. ii. 16, etc.

[2] See Rom. vi. 22. It is noteworthy that the notion of *reward* (which here suggests itself) 'belongs to the circle of ideas associated with *κύριος, δεσπότης, δοῦλος, ἐργάτης*' (Swete on *The Apocalypse*, p. 306).

him because he first loved us.[1] In loving God we love what He is and what He wills; we desire and seek for ourselves and for others that perfect well-being which includes happiness, but of which the chief constituent element is Christ-like goodness.

Again, if the love of God means the love of goodness in its supreme, because its personal, embodiment, the highest *reward* attainable by man is the opportunity of exercising to the full his capacities for love and service. There are obviously lower stages in moral development, at which the occasional appeal to inferior motives, *e.g.* to fear, may be desirable. Christ Himself seems to recognise the need of such an appeal when He points not so much to a future state of retribution as to a present spiritual sphere in which conduct is indissolubly linked to consequences, and 'the searching laws of a spiritual kingdom' already operate. But such insistence on rewards and penalties is appropriate only to a rudimentary stage of moral education. The appeal to fear will perhaps be necessary as an aid to the will in the conflict with strong temptations; ultimately and normally it should yield to the love which *casteth out fear.*[2] Fear will change its character, and become, not the mere dread of punishment, but that 'sacred fear of all offence' which is characteristic of sonship.[3] Moreover,

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[1] 1 St. John iv. 19.

[2] Cp. Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil,* vol. i. p. 263.

[3] Iren., iv. 16. 5, speaking of the New Testament law of liberty, says: 'Auxit etiam timorem; filios enim plus timere oportet quam servos et maiorem dilectionem habere in patrem.' He refers to such passages as St. Matt. v. 22, 28; xii. 36.

moral action will occasionally be, in effect, a 'venture of faith'—foregoing prospective advantage for the sake of simply pleasing God. So character will advance to greater heights of disinterestedness and purity, the will responding more uniformly to a nobler and purer motive, and looking not for a temporal, but for a *spiritual* reward. Indeed the reward promised to man is one that can appeal to him only in so far as he loses himself and makes the divine purpose wholly his own. The reward is not happiness or pleasure, but spiritual perfection: the fulfilment of every aspiration and the satisfaction of every desire in God and in the promotion of His kingdom. The love which yearns for a more intimate union and a closer affinity with its object finds its sufficient recompense in attaining to that which it seeks. God Himself—the fruition of God and co-operation with Him—is the reward of His children.[1] Their prayer is, *In Te habeamus omnia quem elegimus super omnia.*

Enough has perhaps been said to vindicate Christianity from the charge that it is a thinly disguised appeal to selfishness. The pursuit of

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[1] Cp. Aug. *enarr.* xi. *in Ps.* 118. 6: 'Deum non colimus nisi propter Deum ut sui cultus ipse sit merces'; and *de spir. et litt.* xxxvi. *seq.*: 'Nunc ipsius bonum cordis promittitur, mentis bonum, spiritus bonum, hoc est intelligibile bonum, cum dicitur, *Dabo leges meas in mente eorum*, etc. . . . Quid hoc bono melius, quid hac felicitate felicius, vivere Deo, vivere de Deo apud quem est fons vitae et in cuius lumine videbimus lumen?' See also Aquin. *Summa*, ii. ii^{ae}, 28 (esp. art. 3); and H. S. Holland, *Creed and Character*, serm. xviii., 'The Energy of Unselfishness.'

perfect goodness in reality excludes the action of merely pleasure-seeking motives. As is well known, the possibility of a disinterested love of God, untainted by any consideration of future reward, was the topic of a famous controversy between Fénélon and Bossuet in the seventeenth century. But the question in dispute, if presented in the form, 'Ought we to love God for His sake or for our own?' becomes, as Butler points out, 'a mere mistake of language.' The true love of self is an aspect or part of the love of God, and the 'consolations' which Christianity offers can only be enjoyed in so far as they are not made the conscious *aim* of moral effort. The joy or pleasure which is promised to the good man is none other than that which necessarily accompanies the possession and exercise of virtue.[1]

In the attitude or habit of mind which we have seen to be characteristic of the Christian in his relation to God, two points have been emphasised: (1) the temper of *unworldliness*, which, in its positive aspect, is nothing less than filial devotion or adherence to God; (2) *singleness*, or *purity*, or *simplicity* of heart, which seeks only the approval of God. But the spirit of devotion does not exclude

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[1] T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 316, observes that 'Religious rhetoric is apt to be far in arrear of the motives which it seeks to express, and to strengthen by expression. "Unspeakable joys" has been but a phrase to convey the yearning of the soul for that perfection which is indescribable except so far as attained. Joys that are unspeakable are unimaginable, and the desire which really has such joys for its object is quite different from a desire excited by an imagination of pleasure.'

a serious and intelligent interest in the practical tasks of ordinary life. On the contrary, the Christian realises that he is a fellow-worker with God, a son sent to labour in his Father's vineyard. To him the world 'means intensely and means good.' It is the sphere in which Spirit is already immanent and will ultimately be supreme; in which a righteous and invincible Will is deliberately bringing to accomplishment an unchanging purpose of good. Accordingly, a Christian throws himself energetically into the tasks and interests of the present, with the greater earnestness because the time is so short and the varied needs of humanity make so urgent an appeal to his chivalry and unselfishness. But in spirit he remains detached from the world. He will not use its weapons or seek its rewards. He passes through it as a *stranger and pilgrim*, judging of all things with the *mind of Christ*, and sitting loose to the perishable interests and fleeting *fashion of this world*.[1] For earthly care and mammon alike are enemies of the soul—inconsistent with the trustful temper of sonship and with the mind that seeks in God its highest good.[2] Thus the Christian endeavours to overcome all 'inner unrest.' He has found his true centre and home. He sets himself to 'see God in all things and all things in God,' and to use the things of time in the spirit of one whose heart is fixed on an *eternal inheritance*.[3]

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[1] Cp. 1 Cor. ii. 15, 16; vii. 31; Rom. xii. 2.

[2] See Harnack, *What is Christianity?* pp. 84 foll. [E.T.]. On 'sollicitudo,' see Aquin. *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 108. 3 (*ad* 5).

Heb. ix 15. Cp. Aug. *de mor. eccl.* xxxvii.

2. True self-love is an integral part of the love of God. We love ourselves aright in proportion as we love God. Yet the converse also is true, namely, that 'no man can become such as he desires to be unless he hates himself as he now is.'[1] Christianity, in fact, as we gather from Rom. vii. 14 foll., recognises and lifts into special prominence the ancient distinction between the higher and the lower self. Love of the lower self constitutes the very essence of sin; love of the true or 'coming' self means devotion to an ideal which can only be realised with the aid of God's grace.[2] There is, then, a rational or virtuous—what Butler calls a 'cool'—self-love which prompts a man to cherish his personality as being itself the object of a divine purpose of love. Self-love also coincides with the due love of one's neighbour, as Butler points out. For our chance of becoming better than we are at present, depends in no small degree upon the moral condition of the society in which we live: *No man liveth to himself.*[3] And, on the other hand, if we are to love our

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[1] Aug. *de vera rel.* xlviii. See also *de Trin.* viii. 12 and *epist.* cxxx. 14.

[2] Aug. *serm.* ccxvi. 8: 'Amate quod eritis: eritis autem filii Dei.' On false or excessive self-love, see Butler, *Serm.* x. § 6. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* ix. 8. 7, says: *τὸν μὲν ἀγαθὸν δεῖ φίλαυτον εἶναι . . . τὸν δὲ μοχθηρὸν οὐ δεῖ.* Cp. Plato, *de legg.* 731, E.

[3] Butler, *Serm.* i. § 6. Cp. T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 240 (p. 290): 'This power of contemplating himself as possibly coming to be that which he is not, and as so coming to be in and through a society in which he lives a permanent life, is in promise and potency an interest in the bettering of mankind, in the realisation of its capabilities or the fulfilment of its vocation,' etc.

neighbour aright, self-love must be the rule and standard of our dealings with others. That which involves the highest perfection and blessedness of each individual must be absolutely desirable for the whole of humanity.[1]

The virtuous love of self, then, is implied in the due consciousness of our relationship to God. The Christian loves himself in God: he 'looks upon himself,' says the Cambridge Platonist, John Smith, 'as being what he is rather by his soul than by his body; he values himself by his *soul*, that being which hath the greatest affinity with God.'[2] And we may well believe that the virtue of self-love has gained larger significance in proportion as the idea of personality has been more clearly elucidated. In its *negative* aspect, self-love implies the spirit of self-discipline: the habit of sobriety in judgment, in self-estimation, in the indulgence of innocent desires and affections.[3] It tends continually towards singleness of heart, towards that 'unification' of the personality which secures its ideal state. All inward duality or contradiction is gradually overcome; the lower is subdued to the higher, the flesh to the spirit. *Positive* self-love, on the other hand, implies the disciplined use of every personal gift and faculty—the due satisfaction of the instinct of self-realisation. We shall see hereafter what particular duties are included in the endeavour to

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[1] See Aug. *de vera rel.* xlvii. 90 and 91.

[2] *Select Discourses*, no. ix., 'The Excellency and Nobleness of True Religion,' ch. ii. p. 387 [London, 1660].

[3] Cp. Rom. xii. 3; 2 Cor. x. 5, etc.

satisfy this instinct. Meanwhile it will suffice to recall the language of the New Testament in regard to the task that lies before each individual personality, namely, that of 'winning' or 'acquiring' the soul;[1] and this is to be achieved by 'losing' self in the steadfast thought of God and of His will not for ourselves only, but for the universe. Regarded as a virtue, self-love may be briefly described as the spirit of entire self-consecration; the dedication of soul and body, of mental endowments and spiritual gifts, to the service of God and of mankind. This is the 'living sacrifice,' 'the reasonable service,' which lies at the root of a Christian's social usefulness. Each man is called to realise and estimate aright his own peculiar gift, and to use it in the service of Christ and for the promotion of His kingdom.[2] Thus all that relates to the individual personality is brought within the domain of a single law—the law of love.

3. Faith is, as we have seen, a social act. It brings a man into close relationship with his fellows, who, like himself, have the capacity for divine sonship. Thus the love of God includes the love of man and an active desire for his highest good. This brotherly love is first cultivated within the limits of the Christian society, and is extended to our fellow-man as man,[3] the word 'neighbour' being

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[1] St. Luke xxi. 19. Cp. Inge, *Personal Idealism*, *etc.* ch. iv. (esp. pp. 102 foll.); and John Smith, *Discourses*, pp. 389, 390.

[2] See Rom. xii.

[3] 2 Pet. i. 7: ἐπιχορηγήσατε . . . ἐν τῇ εὐσεβείᾳ τὴν φιλαδελφίαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ τὴν ἀγάπην. Cp. 1 St. John ii. 9 with Westcott's note.

a comprehensive term which includes all mankind so far as the range of our influence extends. Hence Augustine (following Irenaeus) gives us the pregnant maxim, *Proximus est omni homini omnis homo*, and he is only repeating what had long been a commonplace with the Stoics.[1] But this merely academic doctrine of universal brotherhood only became a living and effective principle of action among Christian believers. In the New Testament a supreme place is assigned to the love of man; it is enough to mention the practical prominence of the second table of the decalogue in Christ's answer to the young ruler; in St. Paul's summary of the law; in St. John's comprehensive description of the Christian message.[2] The varied relationships of life constitute so many different forms of moral obligation, and the fulfilment of *social* duty is the real test of Christian profession; it is the essential and characteristic outcome of the filial desire to imitate God.[3]

We are not at present concerned with specific duties, but with a certain disposition or attitude of mind; we need therefore, at this point, only notice

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[1] Aug. *de disc. Christ.* iii.; cp. Iren. iv. 13. 4: 'Homo homini proximus.' Cicero, *de off.* iii. 6. 27, says: 'Etiam hoc natura praescribit ut homo homini, quicumque sit, ob eam ipsam causam quod is homo sit, consultum velit.'

[2] See St. Matt. xix. 17–19; Rom. xiii. 8, 9; 1 St. John ii. 7 foll.; iii. 11 foll.; iv. 20.

[3] St. Matt. v. 43–48. Cp. Ath. *c. Arian. orat.* iii. 19: *κατὰ τοῦτο γὰρ μόνον δυνάμεθά πως αὐτοῦ μιμηταὶ γένεσθαι . . . ὅτι τὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ διακονοῦμεν ἀλλήλοις . . . κατὰ μίμησιν γινόμεθα ἐνάρετοι καὶ υἱοί.*

some leading traits of the Christian character, in its instinctive response to the claims of neighbourly love. These traits might, no doubt, be otherwise described as principles of action; as such they constitute what are sometimes called the 'paradoxes' of Christianity. But in Jesus Christ ethical and spiritual principles were embodied in a life. In His example we see exhibited in concrete form the mysterious ways of love—

> 'How love might be, hath been indeed, and is.'

We contemplate in His sacred Person not so much a harmony of separate 'virtues' as one supreme embodiment of filial devotion, flowing forth for the enrichment and sanctification of mankind, working with 'manifold wisdom' towards far-distant results.

(i.) Characteristic, then, of Christian love is a certain *idealism*, or devotion to the ideal of God's kingdom. Mindful of the precept, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God*, the Christian thinks nobly of man's possibilities, and whole-heartedly believes that his true life *consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth*;[1] the kingdom of God is something higher than a state of material well-being or animal satisfaction.[2] He who has *the mind of Christ* sees deep into the roots of human misery and degradation; he shrinks instinctively from any form of philanthropic activity that would impair the character

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[1] St. Luke xii. 15, 23; cp. St. Matt. vi. 33 (and the context). In what follows I am indebted to Prof. Peabody's book, *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character*, ch. vi.

[2] Rom. xiv. 17.

or self-respect of its object. In other words, he seeks for others, as for himself, a state of *spiritual* well-being, to which other forms of good are subordinate and subsidiary. The love of God necessarily implies reverence for men, and insight into their deepest needs and capacities. Christ Himself was the 'friend' of the sinful and outcast. He raised them by treating them with respect and tenderness; He discerned latent capacities of goodness even in the worst; He taught them to realise that they were children of God, created in His image, and destined for friendship and communion with Him. This 'enthusiasm of humanity,' as it has been well called, is the inspiring motive of the Christian's efforts to serve mankind. It tends to exclude all haste, superficiality and impatience in dealing with the evils of human society. The spirit of brotherly love is guided by wisdom and controlled by reverence.[1] *Beatus qui intelligit super egenum et pauperem.*

(ii.) Another distinctive trait of the Christian character is the spirit of forgiveness—readiness to *overcome evil with good.*[2] This is the most characteristic innovation of the Gospel, for though the duty of forgiveness was not unknown to heathen moralists, it remained a counsel of perfection, was not strongly emphasised, and was perhaps commonly regarded as a form of weakness, commendable

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[1] See *Ecce Homo*, ch. xvii., 'The Law of Philanthropy'; S. Barnett, *The Service of God*, pp. 245 foll.; H. P. Liddon, *Univ. Sermons* (ser. 1), no. 3, 'The Honour of Humanity.'

[2] Rom. xii. 21; cp. St. Matt. v. 38.

only in so far as it involved resistance to passion.[1] The Christian is prompted to forgive, partly by consideration of the imperfect and faulty nature which he shares with the offender; partly by that dispassionate view of the injury which results from a just, and not inordinate, self-love; chiefly by a desire to imitate the divine compassion to which he owes his own deliverance from sin and its effects.[2] There is no need to enlarge here upon the ethics of forgiveness. Forgiveness, regarded as a *duty*, is obviously subject to conditions ('*If he repent*, forgive him'), and is not in all circumstances praiseworthy.[3] Regarded as a temper or habit of mind, however, it is simply the natural instinct and outflow of a love that does not seek its own, but only the good of another, and therefore *beareth*, *believeth*, *hopeth*, *endureth all things*.[4] Thus the spirit of forgiveness comes to coincide with the love of enemies, which consists in praying for them, serving them in case of need, judging them charitably, and seeking always their highest welfare. The general principle that underlies the habit of forgiveness is implied in the rule of St. Paul already noticed: *Overcome evil with good;* for the forgiving temper is the counterpart

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[1] See passages collected by Dr. J. H. Bernard in his edition of Butler's *Sermons* (Macmillan, 1900), p. 15 note.

[2] Eph. iv. 32; v. 1; Col. iii. 13; and the parable in St. Matt. xviii. 23 foll. On forgiveness, see *Ecce Homo*, chh. xxii., xxiii.; Butler, *Serm.* ix.; Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, bk. 1, ch. 9.

[3] Cp. Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, vol. ii. pp. 202 f., 243.

[4] 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

in man of that divine wisdom which chose not force, but gentleness, as the method of man's redemption: *Nihil egit vi sed omnia suadendo et monendo.*[1]

(iii.) The spirit of sacrifice, also, is characteristic of the Christian—readiness to spend and be spent for others, in confidence that a man 'gains his life' by losing it, and realises himself by free self-communication to his fellows. This is the familiar paradox of the Christian life, that in ministering to others we serve our own highest interest; that the enrichment and perfecting of personality depend on the extent to which a man escapes from the self-centred life and enters deeply into the common life of humanity. So our Lord's words find their verification in spiritual experience: *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* A man's true blessedness or good 'is to be found in the abundance of his life, which means in the abundance of what he is and does. And what can he be or do except in relation and interchange with others, in mutual offices of love and goodness?'[2] The spirit of Christ in His servants is the spirit of one who *pleased not himself*, and who *went about doing good.*[3]

(iv.) Another distinctive mark of the Christian character is willingness to serve. Our Lord moved among men as a willing minister to their needs: *I am among you as he that serveth.*[4] And if we study

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[1] Aug. *de vera rel.* xvi.

[2] Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 67.

[3] Rom. xv. 3; Acts x. 38.

[4] St. Luke xxii. 27; St. John xiii. 15.

the passages in which He explicitly teaches the principle of service,[1] we find that He does not merely point to His own example, but seems also to appeal to two primary human instincts—the love of power and the emotion of pity. Both the desire for mastery and the sentiment of compassion are to find their appropriate consecration in the life of service, in extending as widely as possible the 'area of common good.' In particular we are struck by the high place which *compassion* holds in the ethics of the Gospel. It was a principle of which heathen philosophy and ethics made little account. It may even be regarded as a discovery of Christianity.[2] Thus we find a writer like Lactantius declaring that if the primary element in righteousness is union with God, the second is union with man through compassion or 'humanity,' which he defines to mean 'the love of man as being the same that we are.'[3] The aim of humanity in this large sense is to secure

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[1] *e.g.* St. Matt. xx. 26–28.

[2] Mozley, *Univ. Serm.* no. ix. (p. 189). As regards the existence of 'humanity' in ancient times, we may recall (i.) the fact that there was an altar of *Pity* at Athens, mentioned by Pausanias, and alluded to in a passage of Statius, *Theb.* xii. 481 foll. (ii.) The fact that compassion often acted as a motive, at any rate in imperial times. It is true that the Stoic ideal was ἀπάθεια (Cic. *Tusc. disp.* iv. 17), but Cicero himself, as Augustine notes, regarded pity as a virtue, whereas the Stoics called it a vice (*de civ.* ix. 5). And there is evidence of a marked growth of humanitarian and charitable feeling in the age of the Empire. Seneca, for instance, speaks of the gladiatorial contests as 'mera homicidia' (*epist.* vii.). See Dill, *Rom. Society from Nero to M. Aurelius*, bk. ii. chh. 1, 2.

[3] *div. inst.* vi. 10, 11.

for each and all the good of which they are capable. That this good includes *goodness* as its most essential element has already been stated. Augustine accordingly says that a Christian should aim at leading his fellow-men to love God, and that this is the real end of all social service.[1] Compassion is, in fact, a fellow-feeling for human need in all its various forms; it is the instinct of love to be self-communicative, to withhold no good which can enrich or benefit another. Yet this instinct is controlled and guided, as we have seen, by spiritual ideals; it aims at ministering not so much to the material needs of men as to the advancement of the divine kingdom.

4. In relation to what Scripture calls 'the world,' namely, the present order of human society regarded in its separation from God, the Christian character manifests a trait which is practically identical with *fortitude* or *courage*. Here we have the transfiguration of a virtue which holds a place of honour in pre-Christian ethics. Amid the widely different conditions of modern Christendom, courage has somewhat changed its character. It is no longer confined, as it virtually was by Plato and Aristotle, to the heroic self-devotion of the citizen-soldier. In part, courage is a passive virtue—the 'world-resisting' element in character, and 'hostility to the world' obviously implies a whole set of ideas

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[1] *de doc. Christ.* i. 29: 'Velle debemus ut omnes nobiscum diligant Deum et totum quod vel eos adiuvamus vel adiuvamur eis ad unum illum finem referendum est.' Cp. Green, *Prolegomena, etc.* § 244 (pp. 295 foll.), and see Butler's *Sermon* 'Upon compassion' (no. v.).

which were foreign to ancient thought.[1] For a Christian, the world, in its ethical sense, is a false or perverted nature alienated from God by sin, and presenting a permanent obstacle to the realisation of spiritual aims and ideals. It is noteworthy that the virtue of endurance or patience (*ὑπομονή*) holds a very prominent place in the ethical teaching of the New Testament, especially in the later books.[2] Naturally enough, fortitude displayed itself in the early history of the Church as endurance under the test of persecution and *fiery trial*. In modern life fortitude more often means persistence in faith or well-doing, in spite of ridicule, contempt, or the pressure of hostile opinion; it is the quality by which a man holds his own, despite not only the enmity of the bad, but the authority of the good. But fortitude is also the name of that characteristically Christian temper which bears with serene steadfastness the ordinary shocks and vicissitudes of human life—the temper of which St. Paul is so conspicuous an example.[3] It is the meekness which from hour to hour quietly bears the burden that each day brings with it, and which is not dismayed

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[1] Cp. Strong, *Christian Ethics*, p. 131.

[2] Particularly in the Apocalypse; see i. 9; ii. 2, 3; xiii. 10; xiv. 12, etc. Perhaps *ὑπομονή* corresponds most closely to Aristotle's *καρτερία*. Mayor on 2 Pet. i. 6 quotes *Mag. Mor.* ii. 6. 34: *ὁ καρτερῶν καὶ ὑπομένων τὰς λύπας, οὗτος καρτερικός ἐστιν.* Ambrose, *de off.* i. 37, is akin to Aristotle in recognising the element of *reason* in courage. It is (he says) part of fortitude to consider what is possible, and not to attempt what is above our strength (referring to St. Matt. x. 23).

[3] Ambrose, *de officiis*, i. 36, 39.

or discouraged even when life seems to be a losing battle. It is the grace which our Lord exhibited, not only amid the sufferings of the cross, but in His invariable attitude towards men under trial and provocation. Fortitude sustains the Christian under the discipline of common life, with its element of inevitable difficulty and pain.

But fortitude is also in a real sense an *active* virtue. It undoubtedly includes active hostility to evil; the virtuous display of resentment directed against oppression, cruelty, selfishness, or deceit. In his treatment of 'resentment,' Butler dwells particularly on its *social* function.[1] What it avenges is not any personal wrong, but injury regarded as hurtful to another or to the community at large. The duty of self-renunciation, the relinquishment of merely personal claims, the suppression of the instinct of revenge,—these are characteristically Christian. But our sense of right and wrong, our sympathy with the injured and oppressed, is no merely personal feeling. It is our way of taking part in the divine process of retribution. The absence of resentment in this sense is a moral defect.[2] 'This forfeiture of good will by the wrong-doer,' says Dr. Martineau, 'is the natural defence of right among men, and to tamper

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[1] *Serm.* ix. § 8; cp. *Serm.* viii., 'Upon Resentment,' and *Serm.* i. § 7.

[2] Ambr. *de off.* i. 36: 'Qui enim non repellit a socio iniuriam si potest, tam est in vitio quam ille qui facit' (referring to the example of Moses, Ex. ii. 12 f.). Cp. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* ii. 7. 15; iii. 1. 24; Bern. *serm.* 2 *in Res.* v.

with it is to imperil an essential security of the moral life.'[1] Finally, we may follow Aristotle at least in regarding fortitude as specially concerned with death. The Christian view of death as a transition from one mode or stage of being to another, and as an event hallowed and transfigured by Christ's submission to it, corrects the impulse either to unduly court death, or to shrink from it with excessive horror. Moreover, an important part of the love of God is trustful resignation to His will, which bravely accepts what He appoints, and rests in the assurance of His all-embracing providence.[2] To a Christian, as to his Master, death is the crowning sacrifice of a lifelong obedience and service.[3]

We have now briefly reviewed the different spheres in which Christian character displays itself. In each, as we have seen, there is a characteristic excellence, or attitude of personality, in regard to the various objects to which it stands related. God is the supreme Object of filial devotion; towards our neighbour, love manifests itself in the spirit of brotherly service; towards ourselves, mainly as a habit of self-control; the world is the object of resistance and the sphere of spiritual victory. But

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[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, ii. 201.

[2] See Butler, *Serm.* xiv. § 3: 'Resignation to the will of God is the whole of piety.'

Phil. ii. 8; cp. St. Mark x. 45.

before leaving the subject, it may be pointed out how closely we find ourselves in harmony with the fourfold division of virtue which was already familiar to ancient moralists: wisdom, temperance, justice, fortitude.

These 'cardinal' or 'principal' virtues[1] are constantly grouped together by Greek writers. In his earlier dialogues Plato seems to accept the classification as already traditional. In later ones (*e.g. Republic* and *Laws*) he attempts to show that they correspond to the natural constitution of the soul. In the Stoic schools the four virtues were supposed to embrace the whole of that 'life according to nature' in which virtue exists.[2] With customary modes of education and habits of thought the classification passed into Christian ethics. In Origen's moral teaching they formed a central point. Ambrose devotes a large part of his *de officiis* to their consideration.[3] Augustine regards the cardinal virtues as different forms in which the love of God manifests itself. Thus, in the *de moribus ecclesiae* he defines fortitude to mean 'love cheerfully enduring all things for the sake of God'; temperance, 'love keeping itself entire and

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[1] Aquinas, *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 61. Cp. Strong, *Christian Ethics*, lect. iv.

[2] Cicero, *de invent.* ii. 53, mentions them as inclusive of all the virtues.

[3] See *de off.* libb. i., ii. In ii. 9 he says: '*Vulgi usu* dividitur una quidem forma virtutum, ut temperantia sit in despiciendis voluptatibus; fortitudo spectetur in laboribus et periculis; prudentia in delectu bonorum, sciens commoda et adversa distinguere; iustitia quae sit bona custos iuris alieni et vindex proprietatis, suum cuique conservans.'

inviolate for God'; justice, 'love serving God only, and therefore controlling aright all else that is subject to man'; prudence, 'love discriminating between those things which assist, and those which retard, its approach to God.'[1] Aquinas is strongly influenced in his discussion of the cardinal virtues by the study of Augustine, to whom, in his more analytical and inductive treatment, he is related somewhat as Aristotle is to Plato.[2] On the whole, the most simple and suggestive view of these virtues is that of Augustine, who regards them as corresponding to four different modes of *personal relationship*. Following his guidance we may define prudence as the virtue which maintains the soul in a right attitude to God: that fear of Him and choice of Him above all things which is *the beginning of wisdom.* Justice is the temper that renders *to all their dues* according to their various claims and needs. Temperance is the habit of discipline in which virtuous self-love finds its appropriate exercise. Fortitude is the spirit which bears and overcomes such hindrances to virtue and such trials of endurance as are inevitable in a sinful world. We need not deny that there is something artificial in these distinctions, especially if we recognise with Plato the essential unity of virtue and the mutual interdependence of particular aspects of character. But the New Testament at least uniformly teaches that love is the fundamental element in Christian virtue; and love cannot be

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[1] *de mor. eccl.* xxv. Cp. *de lib. arb.* i. 27.

[2] *Summa,* ii. ii^{ae}, quaestt. 47 foll.

rightly dissociated from the exercise of thought and will. Love in its essential meaning must include prudence, temperance, fortitude and justice. It is *the bond of perfectness;* the root as well as the crown of all right doing; *the fulfilling of the law;*[1] the first commandment and the last; the abridgment of all sacred knowledge; the very sum of true religion. *Unde mihi videtur quod definitio brevis et vera virtutis, ordo est amoris.*[2]

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[1] Col. iii. 14. See Lightfoot, *ad loc.*, and cp. Rom. xiii. 10; 1 Cor. xiii.

[2] Aug. *de civ.* xv. 22. Cp. Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* ii. 5. 4.

CHAPTER XI

THE MORAL DYNAMIC

'Ce que Platon n'a pu persuader à quelque peu d'hommes choisis et si instruits, une force secrète le persuade à cent milliers d'hommes ignorants par la vertu de peu de paroles.'—PASCAL.

THE uniqueness of Christianity consists in its mode of dealing with a problem which all non-religious systems of morality tend to overlook or abandon in despair—the problem of translating the ideal of virtue into character and conduct. The Gospel sets before men not only an explanation of life, but an ideal of life; it also imparts the secret of actually realising the ideal. The science of ethics determines what it is right to do; the grace which Christianity offers enables men to do it.

An illustration of what has been said may be found in the chasm that existed between the *theory* of professed moralists during the first two centuries of the Christian era, and the actual moral condition of the people. In Seneca, Plutarch and Marcus Aurelius, for example, we find a lofty and austere system of ethics, and isolated precepts closely akin to those of the Gospel itself. Yet in spite of this, the general condition of Roman society was in the main what satirists like Juvenal represent it to

have been; at the best it was almost destitute of beliefs or institutions of a moralising kind, and it was devoted to inhuman and brutalising amusements. The philosopher had, in fact, scarcely any point of contact with the masses of the people, nor had he any practicable idea of means by which they might be influenced.[1] The Platonist, with his purely intellectual conception of virtue, believed that education was the only remedy for moral disease.[2] Modern naturalism, on the other hand, is inclined to repudiate even this method of dealing with the problem. 'We may be sure,' says Mr. Cotter Morison, 'that neither therapeutics nor moral training will ever turn the bad into the good, the evil constitution or character into the vigorous and moral. . . . There is no remedy for a bad heart, and no substitute for a good one. Good men, like poets, are born, not made.'[3] It falls far short, however, of the truth to represent the mere 'personal influence' of Christ and His followers as the instrument by which character is strengthened and regenerated.[4] The fact is that the religion of Christ is a divinely revealed *way of salvation*, that is, of deliverance from sin and moral impotence. Christian goodness

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[1] Cp. Lecky, *Hist. of Europ. Morals*, i. 291 f.

[2] The following is, perhaps, a typical passage: Dion. Chrys. *orat.* xxxii. 15: διὰ γὰρ ἀνθρώπων ἄνοιαν καὶ τρυφὴν καὶ φιλοτιμίαν δυσχερὴς ὁ βίος, καὶ μεστὸς ἀπάτης, πονηρίας, λύπης, μυρίων ἄλλων κακῶν· τούτων δὲ ἓν ἴαμα καὶ φάρμακον ἐποίησαν οἱ θεοὶ παιδείαν καὶ λόγον, ᾧ διὰ βίου μέν τις χρώμενος καὶ συνεχῶς ἦλθέ ποτε πρὸς τέλος ὕγιες καὶ εὔδαιμον.

[3] *The Service of Man*, p. 213 f.

[4] *Ecce Homo*, ch. ix.

is the reproduction in individual men of the Christ-life. The humanity of Christ, perfectly well-pleasing to God, and liberated by death from earthly limitations, can be communicated to men as a recreative and transforming force. The ideal of the Gospel is not merely that we should imitate Christ, but that *He Himself*—His very image and likeness—should be *formed in us*, and *dwell* in us as a principle of spiritual life, holiness and power.[1] Thus the life of the Incarnate is extended and perpetuated in the life of the redeemed; the character of the Christ is reproduced in His members, and this through the operation of the Spirit of grace, accomplishing the presence of the Redeemer in His people.

The secret, then, of the Christian character lies in a permanent relation of dependence to a living Christ. 'Sanctification' is, in one aspect at least, the progressive appropriation by man of the Christ-life; the growth in him of the Christ-likeness. Accordingly, holiness is spoken of in the New Testament as δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ; it is a *free gift* at once imparted by God and acceptable to Him.[2]

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[1] See Gal. iv. 19; Col. i. 27. Cp. Rom. viii. 10; 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Eph. iii. 17.

[2] Rom. i. 17; v. 16, 17. Aug. *de gratia*, xiv.: 'Si autem *data* est [gratia], non dicitur iustitia nostra sed Dei, quia sic fit nostra ut sit nobis a Deo.' Cp. Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 69: God fulfils His purpose for us, 'not by the old impossible method of exacting a righteousness that could not be rendered, but by the new and practicable method of imparting a righteousness which could be received, and which could and should be none the less *our* righteousness because not ours, but God's in us.'

The life and fruitfulness of the branch depend on its 'abiding' in the true vine. To be a Christian means *manentem in se habere Christum et manere in Christo.*[1]

Now the presence, in His essential truth and holiness, of the living Christ in humanity, is the divine response to the self-surrender of faith. This response is called 'grace'—a beautiful word, of which a few modern definitions are collected in the note at the close of the present chapter. Briefly described, the 'grace' or 'free gift' of God means *the presence of Christ by his Spirit* in the heart of man. It is virtually 'identical with the Spirit of God.'[2] This is the point seized by Augustine when he observes that the law of God written in the heart is nothing else than 'the very presence of the Holy Spirit,' or by Aquinas when he defines grace as 'a certain participation of the divine nature.'[3] Grace in action is the presence of the Spirit of Christ in man, cleansing, renewing, transforming; imparting the very principles of knowledge and power, obedience and love.[4]

This, then, is the distinctive truth of Christian ethics—the fact that ultimately God Himself, the

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[1] Conc. Araus. II. *can.* xxiv. (referring to St. John xv. 1 foll.).

[2] Du Bose, *op. cit.* p. 30.

[3] Aug. *de spir. et litt.* xxxvi.; Aquin. *Summa*, i. ii^ae, 112. 1 (referring to 2 Pet. i. 4).

[4] Aug. *de grat.* xii. 5. fin.: 'Qua gratia agitur non solum ut facienda noverimus, verum etiam ut cognita faciamus; nec solum ut diligenda credamus, verum etiam credita diligamus.' On the relation of the Spirit's work to that of Christ, see Greg. Naz. *orat. theol.* xxxi. 29.

living source of all truth, holiness and love, not only gives to man what He requires of him, but dwells in him in such sense that 'the Spirit that comes from God as *His*, appears in us as *ours*.'[1] The effect of this indwelling of the Spirit is to complete human nature, to perfect its activities and to exalt its capacities. Grace, as Augustine insists, does not annihilate nature, but restores it, lifts it to new levels, and renders it all that it is capable of becoming.[2]

This leads us to the question of the relation between the action of grace and human free-will. It is clear that moral goodness cannot mean the mere possession and exercise of an imparted virtue. It must be the result of personal choice, of deliberate and sustained personal effort.[3] The will of man must continuously co-operate with grace. The action of the Spirit does not supersede man's effort, but awakens and stimulates his desire of good, sustains and encourages him in his effort to fulfil or attain it. 'Grace,' says Augustine, 'heals the will.' The Spirit 'prevents' the will by preparing it to choose the good; 'co-operates with it' by assisting it in the fulfilment of its purpose. And this distinction between 'prevenient' and 'co-operating' grace simply describes in theological language two

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[1] Du Bose, *op. cit.* p. 31.

[2] *de spir. et litt.* xlvii.: 'Non quod per gratiam negata sit gratia, sed potius per gratiam reparata natura.'

[3] This is the truth underlying Cicero's statement: 'Propter virtutem iure laudamur et in virtute recte gloriamur. Quod non contingeret *si id donum a deo, non a nobis haberemus*' (*de nat. deor.* iii. 36. 86).

successive stages in the work of the Spirit, whose mission it is to carry on in human hearts and wills the recreative work of the glorified Redeemer. The entire work of man's renewal is *of God*[1]—God who by the tranquil operation of His providence is ever calling men to Himself, ever bearing silent witness to His will and purpose, ever working for the renewal and perfecting of the nature which sin has marred and degraded, ever seeking the lost and recalling the wanderer.[2] Thus the doctrine of the recreation of character is inseparably connected with that of redemption. The Incarnation was not a mere stage in the moral and spiritual evolution of humanity; it was the restoration of something that had been lost; it was the fulfilment of a hope that had seemed to perish; it was life from the dead. *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy.*[3]

So far we have confined ourselves to simply describing the Church's doctrine of grace, without entering into the problems associated with it. There are, however, two difficulties which are occasionally urged from the purely ethical standpoint, and these it may be well briefly to consider at this point.

1. There is, first, the difficulty that grace

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[1] 1 Cor. i. 30.

[2] Cp. Bern. *in Cant.* lxxxiv. 3: 'Unde voluntas [redeundi]? Inde, ni fallor, quod a Verbo visitata iam sit et quaesita. Nec otiosa quaesitio, quae operata est voluntatem sine qua reditus esse non poterat.' See Note B at the end of the chapter.

[3] Rom. ix. 16.

appears to be arbitrary in its action and narrowly restricted in its range. The religion of Christ embraces only a minority of the human race, and of professing Christians a very large proportion are content with a merely nominal adhesion to their faith. The action of grace is accordingly a mystery which needs elucidation. It does not satisfy the perplexed inquirer to be told that the grace of God works in accordance with a process of 'election,' by which some favoured individuals are 'saved,' others abandoned to the consequences of their inevitable ignorance and weakness. On the other hand, it is felt that, though human personality has a real part to play in the process of its own moral development, and is no mere 'prize contended for by the spirits of darkness and light,'[1] yet salvation cannot simply be the reward of man's own efforts; that God, as the Source of all light and goodness—

> ' . . . can rejoice in nought
> Save only in Himself and what Himself hath wrought';

and that what is well-pleasing to Him must, in the last resort, originate with Him. In plain words, it may be asked, What is the relation between grace and the permanent facts of human nature and consciousness?

2. The difficulty is also raised that grace appears to be an uncertain and incalculable factor which cannot be measured or depended upon; that the doctrine of grace and free-will must necessarily conflict with the steady cultivation of character, and

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[1] Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, i. p. 18.

tends to discourage any patient and persevering endeavour on man's part to conquer his lower nature. 'By encouraging the idea that the most inveterate habits of vice can be reformed by an act of will, the paramount importance of habit is masked or even implicitly denied; that is to say, that one of the most important and widely dominant laws of biology is denied, or the moral nature of man is withdrawn from its dominion.'[1]

1. The first-mentioned difficulty may be partially, at least, met by a clearer apprehension of the normal action of grace. If 'grace' be, as has been explained, an alternative mode of describing the presence and action of the Holy Spirit, we at any rate see the problem in a new and simpler light. The spiritual experience of Christians, equally with the religious history of mankind in general, testifies that no arbitrary or artificial limit can be imposed on the operation of the Spirit of God. He *breatheth where he listeth.* The eternal Word, who acts on humanity through and in the Spirit, is *the light which lighteth every man.* In a sense, then, 'prevenient grace' is at work among men of every period, race and religion. The divine voice reaches man in reason, in conscience, in the phenomena of nature, in the events of history. It appeals to him as a being endowed with faculties which enable him to recognise the presence of God, to apprehend the moral law and to obey its dictates. Man, even in his natural condition, is never left wholly destitute

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[1] Cotter Morison, *The Service of Man*, ch. ix. p. 204. Cp. Martineau's remarks on the Augustinian theology, *ubi sup.*

of help from above, never altogether unvisited by gleams of spiritual light. The Spirit of God, indeed, works widely and freely outside the 'covenanted sphere' of His operations. Everywhere He is leading human souls into the paths of righteousness; everywhere inspiring them with the desire to seek after God.

This view of the action of grace, which is familiar to all students of early Greek theology, and which we connect particularly with the Alexandrine school, is powerfully supported by the facts brought to light by the comparative study of religions. We no longer roughly classify religions as 'true' and 'false.' We recognise everywhere the action of a wise and merciful providence appealing to the human soul in infinitely various ways, and dealing with it in accordance with its capacities and opportunities. Of the non-Christian religions, each originates in some primary need of human nature; each actually witnesses to some vital truth of catholic religion. There is, too, a strange solidarity connecting the different systems; later stages of religious thought are linked to earlier; sublime truths of revelation are dimly foreshadowed in crude and lowly beliefs or ideas. Nor can it be questioned that the sacred books of the heathen nations have served in some measure to educate their moral and spiritual faculties, and to purify unworthy conceptions of Deity.

Since, then, God has ever been revealing Himself to man, and in the Incarnation crowns a process of providential education which has never been

altogether intermitted, we may identify the earliest movements of grace with the tranquil and beneficent operation of divine providence.[1] Further, we may urge the point that 'election,' so far from implying an exclusive and incommunicable privilege vouchsafed to a single favoured nation or race, constitutes, in fact, the measure of its moral responsibility. The few are 'elect' only for the sake of the many, and of those to whom much is given the more is required. Christianity is the 'absolute' religion, in the sense that it represents the loftiest and worthiest ideas of God; that it responds to the spiritual needs of all mankind; that it includes all true elements in other beliefs and exhibits them in their true proportion; that it perfectly accomplishes the real end of religion, namely, the union of the human soul with God; finally, that it consecrates the peculiar gifts and developes the special excellences of each race and nation. But we do not claim that Christianity is the *only* religion that has acted as a moralising and civilising force in humanity.

On the whole, therefore, we may confidently assert that the action of grace is in a sense universal. All men are within reach of the divine influence; and no individual soul that loyally corresponds to the light it possesses is altogether bereft of the presence and guidance of the Spirit of God;[2] the Incarnation

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[1] Cp. Mason, *Faith of the Gospel*, p. 357: 'The first motions of preventing grace are indistinguishable from those of providence.'

[2] On all this subject see the admirably clear and concise statement in Strong, *Manual of Theology*, ch. vi. pp. 307–318.

of the Word is only the climax of that operation whereby He has ever illuminated and disciplined the rational creation and prepared it for union with Himself. In Christ, says Clement of Alexandria, 'we have as our instructor Him that filled the universe with His holy energies in creation, salvation, beneficence, legislation, prophecy, teaching; we have the teacher from whom all instruction comes.'[1]

2. The other objection which is sometimes urged against the doctrine of grace, namely, that it cuts at the root of personal effort, may be more briefly dismissed. Let it suffice to recall the fact that the New Testament continually appeals to man's own *will* as the correlative factor in the work of sanctification. The new personality is required to work out its own salvation[2] by sustained and vigorous effort. From the negative point of view this work consists in purifying self-discipline; positively, in self-consecration.[3] Man is not a passive instrument of the divine grace, nor is he protected from moral failure by any arbitrary decree of election. The old nature has to be overcome and the 'new man' put on—a task which demands the temper of the *soldier* and of the *athlete*: of the soldier, who puts on the 'panoply of God,' and 'stands' watchful and alert, awaiting the onset of his spiritual foe;[4] of the athlete, who realises clearly

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[1] *Protrept*, xi. §§ 112, 113.

[2] Phil. ii. 12.

[3] Cp. the use of *ἁγνίζειν ἑαυτόν*, 1 John iii. 3 (cp. James iv. 8; 1 Pet. ii. 22); *τηρεῖν ἑαυτόν*, Jude 21 (cp. James i. 27), etc.

[4] Eph. vi. 10 foll. Note the frequency of military imagery in St. Paul's Epistles. See Rom. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. x. 5; 1 Thess. v.

the mark at which he aims, and uses his strength for the purpose of gaining the mastery over himself and over the conditions of life.[1]

The subject will, however, meet us again in connection with the discipline of character. It is only necessary here to remind ourselves that the New Testament, studied as a whole, gives no support to the notion that grace is an irresistible or arbitrary force overruling or superseding the exertion of human volition. On the contrary, grace acts as a *moral* force, not compelling the will, but aiding and inspiring its efforts. Grace supplies the very element of instruction and guidance (*παιδεία*) which the Greek regarded as all-important.[2] It is the source of that moral power to fulfil the law of righteousness which the Jew had hitherto sought in vain. Grace at once enlightens man's understanding and assists him to respond to the will of God. But its law of operation will always be involved in

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8; 2 Tim. ii. 3; cp. Ignatius, *epist. ad Polyc.* vi.: *ἀρέσκετε ᾧ στρατεύεσθε, ἀφ᾽ οὗ καὶ τὰ ὀψώνια κομίσεσθε· μήτις ὑμῶν δεσέρτωρ εὑρεθῇ.* In the West the idea of the Christian life as a *military campaign* became common, thanks chiefly to the influence of Tertullian and Cyprian. It was associated with the notion of baptism, regarded as the Christian's military oath. Cyprian, *epist.* xv. 1, calls Christ 'Imperator,' and Origen, *c. Cels.* viii. 73 speaks of the faithful as *στρατόπεδον εὐσεβείας*. Probably we may connect with this circle of ideas the application to the heathen of the title *pagani*, i.e. civilians. See Bigg, *The Church's Task under the Roman Empire*, p. 42 note.

[1] 1 Cor. ix. 24 foll. Cp. Gal. v. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 5; iv. 7; Heb. x. 32; Clem. *ad Cor.* 5; Ignat. *ad Polyc.* 1 (with Lightfoot's note).

[2] Tit. ii. 12: *ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς.*

mystery; for 'grace' is a word which simply connotes the characteristic gift of the New Testament —the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

NOTE A.

SOME MODERN DEFINITIONS OF 'GRACE.'

(1) 'By grace we always understand, first, His favour and undeserved mercy towards us; secondly, *the bestowing of His Holy Spirit* which inwardly worketh; thirdly, the effects of that Spirit whatsoever, but especially saving virtues such as are faith, charity, and hope; lastly, the free and full remission of all our sins. This is the grace which sacraments yield,' etc.[1]

(2) '*This light and Spirit of God* thus freely restored again to the soul and lying in it as a secret source of heaven is called grace, free grace, or the supernatural gift or power of God in the soul.'[2]

(3) 'The free outflow of divine love for the quickening and support of man.'[3]

(4) 'The free and loving favour of God in its spiritual efficacy.'[4]

(5) 'The exercised love of God acting in the forms needed by a real and dependent world.'[5]

(6) 'God's kindness in action as *a movement of His Spirit* within the soul, resulting from the Incarnation, and imparting to the will and affections a new capacity of obedience and love.'[6]

All of these definitions are true and valuable, but the real heart of the matter is approached most nearly in the passages *italicised*.

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[1] R. Hooker, Fragments of *Answer to the Letter of certain English Protestants* (see Bayne, *The fifth book of the Eccles. Polity*, app. 3, p. 651).

[2] W. Law, *The Spirit of Prayer* (ed. 3), p. 62.

[3] Bp. Westcott, *Ep. to the Hebrews*, p. 436.

[4] Bp. Moule, *The Ephesians* [Camb. Bible], p. 44.

[5] Dr. Fairbairn, *Christ in Mod. Theology*, p. 443.

[6] W. Bright, *Anti-Pelagian Treatises of St. Augustine*, introd., p. x.

NOTE B.

ST. BERNARD ON THE ACTION OF DIVINE GRACE.

The following passages well represent the teaching of St. Bernard:—

(*a*) 'Triplex nobis necessaria est benedictio: praeveniens, adiuvans et consummans. Prima misericordiae, secunda gratiae, tertia gloriae. Praevenit misericordia conversionem, adiuvat gratia conversationem, perficit gloria consummationem. . . . Neque enim aut inchoare bonum donec a misericordia praeveniamur; aut agere bonum donec adiuvemur a gratia; aut consummari in bono possumus donec gloria repleamur. Verum in his tribus non immerito dulcius sapit ea [misericordia] quae non modo immeritos, sed et male meritos praevenit: ut dum adhuc filii sumus irae et operamur opera mortis ipse cogitet super nos cogitationes pacis, et ne petentibus quidem, imo et impetentibus, non invocantibus sed provocantibus; non interpellantibus, sed etiam repellentibus, spiritum bonum, spiritum vitae, adoptionis spiritum largiatur' (*de diversis serm.* lxxvi.).

(*b*) 'Ipsa [gratia] liberum excitat arbitrium cum seminat cogitatum; sanat, cum immutat affectum; roborat, ut perducat ad actum; servat, ne sentiat defectum' (*de grat. et lib. arb.* xiv. 47).

(*c*) 'Itaque non liberi arbitrii sed Domini est salus; imo ipse salus, ipse et via est ad salutem. . . . Se fecit viam, qui et salus erat et vita, ut non glorietur omnis caro' (*ibid.* xiii. 43).

CHAPTER XII

THE DISCIPLINE OF CHARACTER

'Domus disciplinae est ecclesia Christi.'—AUGUSTINE.

IT is through the corporate life of a society that the personality of individual men is developed. From the ethical point of view, the Church is a school of character: the sphere in which normally its recreation and education proceed, and in which men are brought to the fulness of their moral stature through sustained union with the living Christ. The grace of God builds a home and forms a school among men.[1] The Church guards and keeps alive the characteristic Christian ideas and thereby exhibits and promotes the Christian ideal of life. Its function is, in fact, both prophetic and educational. The Church is at once a witness to truth and a school of holiness; its office is to disseminate the true knowledge of God and to form character. Hence all its ordinances and institutions—all the gifts committed to its stewardship—have as their sole aim and object the union of the individual soul with God, and through this the bringing to perfection of the whole body of

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[1] Tit. ii. 11, 12.

Christ.[1] This process of education through the discipline of common life in a divine society is viewed by the New Testament from different points of view: as the nurture of a child in a family; as the discipline of a scholar in a school; as the training of a soldier in an army, or of a citizen in a free State. But the central idea that suggests these various metaphors is one and the same, and it corresponds profoundly to the facts of life and to the moral needs of humanity. The principle implied constantly emerges in the New Testament. It is taken for granted in the organisation of the apostolic Churches; it underlies the practical appeals of the different Epistles. The precepts of Rom. xii., for example, imply that character grows through faithful fulfilment of the various relationships of dependence, duty and service which are involved in the ordinary social life of mankind.[2] The life of the family is a discipline in mutual forbearance, tenderness and respect; in an army, men acquire the virtues of loyalty, courage and self-sacrifice; in a city, the faculty of co-operating with others, compassion for the weak, serviceableness and public spirit. Each individual has his own vocation, his peculiar gift and separate ministry, his own special call to act and to bear on behalf of all. For the Church, in its ideal completeness, is destined to manifest *the fulness of Christ:* the total and collective result

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[1] Eph. iv. 12, 13.

[2] Butler's first sermon, 'Upon Human Nature,' is based on Rom. xii. 4, 5.

of the manifold operations of the one Spirit who *divides to each one severally as he will.*[1]

Thus the character of a Christian, as described in such very typical passages as Rom. xii. or 1 Cor. xiii., is formed by, and related to, membership in a body. The moral temper aimed at is social. There is nothing in it of narrow individualism. It thrives in the atmosphere of spiritual brotherhood; it is nourished and supported by the fellowship of saints and by the sympathies bred of common hopes and endeavours. We are not surprised, therefore, that in Phil. ii. 2 the appeal to Christ's example is prefaced by an earnest exhortation to unity, or that in Eph. iv. 1 foll., the believer's response to his ideal vocation is conditional on his *endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* The experience of modern Christians may well incline them to echo the lament of Cyprian, that religious disunion impairs faith and hinders the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit.[2] The weakness of the so-called 'undenominational' principle in education consists mainly in the fact that it ignores the most essential factor in the formation of character. Its tendency, if not its professed aim, is to *detach* the young from any particular religious community, and so to hinder their coming under the influence of the great moulding

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[1] 1 Cor. xii. 11. Cp. Cyr. Hieros. *catech.* xvi. 12: [πνεῦμα] μονοειδὲς μὲν κατέρχεται, πολυειδῶς δὲ ἐνεργεῖ. See the whole passage, and cp. Greg. Naz. *orat. theol.* xxxi. 29.

[2] *de unit. eccl.* xxvi. Cp. Bp. L. Andrewes, *Serm.* i. on 'The Sending of the Holy Ghost' (vol. iii. 313).

ideas of Christianity, or undergoing the wholesome discipline, the protecting and uplifting pressure, of membership in a society.[1] In every other department of thought and action the principle of the dependence of the individual on social environment is acknowledged. 'The individual,' writes Dr. Martineau, 'is the later product, and disengages himself into his independent wholeness as the ripest fruit of a collective development. *Humanity* first as a plural organism, and then *personality* in its singular force,—that is the order of Nature and Providence.'[2] The Christian Church is the typical embodiment and illustration of this fundamental moral law. *None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.*[3] Man's true life consists in the fulfilment of manifold relationships.

The discipline which character undergoes may be broadly considered under two aspects: there is the discipline of common life and the discipline of Church-fellowship.

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[1] The testimony of the late Dr. R. W. Dale is significant: 'For the protection and development of the Christian life and the formation of the ideal Christian character, a Christian environment, a Christian society, is necessary. The fellowship of the saints, with its ethical and spiritual traditions, with its spiritual brotherhood and with its supernatural atmosphere, is a great means of grace' (*The Old Evangelicalism and the New*, p. 31).

[2] *Types of Ethical Theory*, ii. 32. Cp. a passage in i. 82, which points out the analogy between the idea of a Church and that of Plato's ideal republic.

[3] Rom. xiv. 7.

I

It is obvious that the world itself, regarded as a sphere of labour, of suffering, of probation, is a school of character. So argues Bishop Butler, in the familiar chapter of the *Analogy* which insists on 'the credibility . . . that the present life was intended to be a state of discipline for a future one.' The duties of common life; the married state and family cares; the calls of a profession; the claim of our fellow-men—equals, superiors, or dependents—on our service or co-operation; the necessity of attending to the wants of the sick, aged, helpless and poor; the sufferings that fall to our lot—sickness, disablement, sorrow, disappointment; the law of labour, which none can rightfully evade;—these are the universal and common elements in man's ethical and social education. Labour in particular deserves attention in this connection, since it has been raised by Christianity to the dignity of a kind of sacrament, which elevates and purifies life.[1] To ancient thinkers, all bodily toil, at least, was an object of contempt; in this view even Plato and Aristotle fully shared the aristocratic bias which was characteristic of heathen thought. But Jesus Christ consecrated labour as He did all the other conditions of average human life. He recognised the fact that

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[1] Cp. Wilson, *Camb. Lectures on Pastoral Theology*, p. 158, and Barnett in *Christianity and the Working Classes*, p. 95. See also Cunningham, *The Gospel of Work*, especially lect. 1 (Cambridge, 1902).

to the vast majority of mankind toil is the chief element which determines character; that it is a discipline in moral virtues—patience, sympathy, fortitude, honesty, perseverance. The temper of materialism which it is apt to engender is less dangerous than 'the materialism of full-fed idleness.' So, again, the commercial life, the administration of property, the acquisition and employment of wealth, may be, and often are, a school in which high moral qualities are developed. Professor Peabody in his well-known work *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, rightly deprecates a pessimistic view of what is called 'the business world.' Several of Christ's parables are drawn from the ordinary transactions of commerce. The mere continuance of a great industrial system depends on certain elementary moral assumptions, and 'it trains men in some ethical qualities which do not seem to be developed in the same degree anywhere else.'[1] The obvious perils of the business life are, to some individuals at least, the occasion of advance towards the noblest types of virtue. Our Lord, indeed, habitually lays stress upon the ethical importance of routine duties, and His teaching implies that, generally speaking, the growth of character depends on the way in which men deal with the tasks and circumstances of ordinary life. The moral possibilities of each individual are proportioned to the multitude of his obligations, interests and activities. Mere flight from the world, mere escape from its distractions and temptations, is less noble than 'virile mastery of the

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[1] Peabody, *op. cit.* ch. vi. p. 319.

conditions of life;'[1] and in more than one of His parables our Lord teaches that the different issues of personal life depend not on variety of circumstances, but on differences of behaviour and attitude under identical conditions. Men become sinners or saints as the result, not of their environment, but of the way in which they respond to it or react upon it.

Christianity, then, takes due account of the discipline involved in the common life and pursuits of men. It is a discipline manifold in its forms and consequences. Different classes of men have, as we say, their virtues or the defects of their qualities. The habits of the scholar or man of science will tend to foster in him the temper of patience, candour, modesty and self-control. Artisans as a class derive from the circumstances of their life a certain strength of character and no small measure of practical sympathy. We look particularly for large-hearted sympathy in the priest; for patient self-sacrifice and devotion to duty in the physician; for exactness of thought and a strong sense of justice in the lawyer; for integrity, fidelity and industry in the man of business. Nor, on the whole, are we disappointed. Indeed, the serviceableness of any class depends on its maintaining a general level of character corresponding to the special function it fulfils in the community. And the vicissitudes of life, as well as the constant claims of a profession, tend to develope the qualities needed for promoting the welfare of society and holding it together. On

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[1] Black, *Culture and Restraint*, p. 240.

a broad survey of history, we cannot overlook the action of a providential discipline which has raised, and still is raising, the average level of character. The process of improvement is doubtless slow, fitful, and liable to disappointing lapses and interruptions; but it would be faithless to deny that the social life of mankind is not only intended (as Butler would say) to be a moral discipline, but, in the long run, has actually proved to be so.

II

We have next to consider the discipline of Church-fellowship. We have seen that the idea of individual perfection is always associated in the New Testament with the idea of a society, family, or household of God. Corporate life, with its network of relationships, its common aims and ordinances, its mutual services, its pervading 'atmosphere,' is God's great agency for the renewal and edification of character. The Christian Church is the home of individuality; it finds room for widely different types of human character, and the special endowment of each is consecrated to the service of the whole body.[1] And the general object of all the distinct ordinances of the Church—common worship, the public reading of Scripture, preaching, sacraments, the due exercise of spiritual discipline—is to cultivate in its members the spirit of consecration, the dedication of the will to righteousness. Church-fellowship is designed both to foster this spirit and to

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[1] Rom. xii. 4 foll.; 1 Cor. xii. 7 foll.

provide it with adequate scope. Through love of the brethren (φιλαδελφία), learned and practised within the narrower sphere of the divine society, Christians are intended to develope love (ἀγάπη) in the widest sense—the love of man as man, and readiness to serve him in Christ and for His sake.[1]

The very word 'discipline,' however, when used in connection with the traditional system of the Church, raises a question which has often been discussed and which should be briefly noticed here: What is the relation of the duty of self-development to that of self-sacrifice? Attempts have frequently been made to find some point of reconciliation between two ideals which are roughly (and inaccurately) contrasted as the 'Hellenic' ideal of self-culture and the 'Hebraic' ideal of self-sacrifice. It is not difficult to see that these two conceptions of life are not necessarily at variance. The simple truth is that, in view of the all-pervading fact of sin, and the presence in human nature of lawless tendencies and impulses, the true 'self' can only be developed aright with the aid of a certain measure of discipline and restraint. Conversely, the aim of all self-repression is the development of personality, the enlargement of capacities for service.[2]

Accordingly, we are prepared to find an ascetic element in Christianity, a call to self-denial and

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[1] 2 Pet. i. 7.

[2] The problem is discussed fully by H. Black, *Culture and Restraint;* and more briefly by Illingworth, *Christian Character*, ch. 3, and Newman Smyth, *Christian Ethics*, pp. 332 foll. See also Harnack, *What is Christianity?* lect. v.; Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, bk. 2, ch. iii.

self-sacrifice.[1] Asceticism implies the open-eyed recognition of man's tendency to sin, but its intention is rather the disciplinary *education* than the entire *repression* of those natural instincts and faculties which are usually the occasion of transgression. Even in its most distorted forms asceticism witnesses to the conviction that 'there is an element of real wrongness in the world which is neither to be evaded nor ignored, but which must be squarely met and overcome by an appeal to the soul's heroic resources, and neutralised and cleansed away by suffering.'[2] Asceticism implies not merely a willing acceptance of personal discipline, but readiness to enter into the sufferings, and to share the burden, of humanity at large; and while the effort involves pain, such pain is recognised as good because it helps character to become all that it is capable of being; it fosters that spirit of detachment from selfish interests which is so essential a qualification for social service.

Thus in the training of character a negative discipline precedes all positive culture. There must be penitential effort and self-mortification before we can attain to fulness and richness of life. For nothing less or lower than fulness of life (περισσὸν ζωῆς) is the Christian ideal. This does not mean simply 'an equal, all round, harmonious development,' which can only be dismissed as a sheer impossibility considering the actual limitations of human nature, but rather

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[1] St. Mark viii. 34.

[2] W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 362.

'the realisation of a man's highest capacities by the sacrifice of the lower'; the cultivation of moral and spiritual power by self-limitation, by careful concentration of energy on what is best worth seeking. Seneca somewhere observes that as a rule men deliberate about parts of life, but very seldom about life as a whole. They do not consider its true end and significance. They form no clear notion of the good at which they aim, nor of the means by which it may be attained. The Gospel encourages man to contemplate life in its totality; to consider what are its essential elements, what its primary purpose, and how that purpose may be best fulfilled by each individual. This is the real importance of Christ's example. He claims to be *the Way, the Truth, and the Life.* He reveals the true meaning of life, the greatness of its possibilities, and the discipline by which alone it can be raised to the height of its perfection.

There are three great aids to holiness which have a natural and obvious connection with the three main spheres in which personality realises itself; ordinances in which devotion to God, love to man, and the discipline of self find each its comprehensive expression.[1] The threefold ordinance

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[1] Aquin. *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 108, 3 ad 4: 'Omnia quae aliquis facit ad refrenandum seipsum in suis concupiscentiis reducuntur ad *ieiunium*; quaecumque vero fiunt propter dilectionem proximi reducuntur ad *eleemosynam;* quaecumque vero propter cultum Dei fiunt reducuntur *ad orationem.*' So Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* vi. 5, § 6, says that the threefold ordinance 'by way of abridgment comprehendeth whatsoever may attain to sanctimony, holiness, and good life' (cp. v. 23. 1).

of prayer, fasting and almsgiving occupies a prominent place in our Lord's teaching. Each is commended by Him as a means of grace and an aid to that filial freedom—that dominion of the Spirit in man—which found its supreme manifestation in Himself, and which He renders possible for those who will 'receive' Him.

Prayer stands first, as constituting the very life of religion, its essential spirit and mode of expression. In a sense it includes every form of service that man renders to God. It is the instinctive turning of the heart to Him in whom every want is supplied, every aspiration fulfilled.[1] Prayer is, in fact, man's response to the self-revelation of God; it represents his effort to embrace God's will as his choice, God's law as his rule, God's perfection as his pattern. It is a narrow view of prayer that sees in it chiefly or only the offering of *petitions*. Rather it is a means of holding converse with a divine Father and Friend—an opportunity of learning to know His mind, to share His thoughts, to embrace His purposes, to dedicate self to His service.[2] The function of prayer is to *train* and sanctify desire; to direct it to its proper objects, and so to enable

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[1] Aug. *de serm. Dom. in monte*, ii. 14: 'Fit in oratione conversio cordis ad [Deum].'

[2] The following passage from Maximus of Tyre (*circ.* 155 A.D.) shows how close to the Christian point of view was that of eclectic Platonism: Ἀλλὰ σὺ μὲν ἡγεῖ τὴν τοῦ φιλοσόφου εὐχὴν αἴτησιν εἰναι τῶν οὐ παρόντων· ἐγὼ δὲ ὁμιλίαν καὶ διάλεκτον πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς περὶ τῶν παρόντων, κ.τ.λ. (*Diss.* xi. 8, quoted by Dill, *Rom. Soc. from Nero to M. Aurelius*, p. 395 note).

him who prays to receive what God intends to bestow.[1] Temporal needs may legitimately be made the subject of prayer, like everything else that intimately concerns us; the children of God are free to lay before Him their hopes, fears, joys, sorrows, yearnings, aspirations. But the mere petition for temporal gifts and blessings yields, as we advance in the life of prayer, to the consideration, first, that the very name 'Father' implies a wise and watchful providence which understands all our needs before we ask; secondly, that our own ignorance of what is really best for us must needs temper our anxiety to obtain earthly blessings. Moreover, recent tendencies in science and speculation have modified our notions of prayer. We are learning to think *less* of specific answers to prayer and *more* of the active identification of our will with the divine purpose. We consider prayer *less* as a means to an end, *more* as an end in itself; *less* as an attempt to modify the normal course of divine providence, *more* as the essential act of religion, the characteristic expression of the true son's yearning for union and co-operation with his Father.[2] In prayer we do not seek to *change* the purpose of God, but to understand, embrace and fulfil it. Accordingly, the one and only petition of a perfect prayer is for union of will and affection

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[1] Aug. *epist.* cxxx. 17: '[Deus vult] exerceri in orationibus desiderium nostrum, quo possimus capere quod praeparat dare.'

[2] See a thoughtful chapter (xi.) in G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, on 'The Life of Prayer.'

with God; for such love towards Him as may find all things working together for its eternal good.[1]

Why, then, is prayer necessary, if its only purpose is to bring the heart and will of man into accord with the divine will? The answer is that God proportions His gifts to the sincerity of man's *desire*, and prayer (as we have seen) is the great means by which desire is strengthened and enlarged, cleansed and sanctified. It is the revealed condition of receiving God's gifts, but those gifts respond not so much to our petitions as to our real needs. And the certainty that our heavenly Father *knoweth what things* we *have need of before* we *ask* tends to make prayer ever more submissive, trustful and simple. The single clause, *Fiat voluntas Tua*, tends to become the whole burden of our petition; for it embodies our whole need; it asks simply, and without limitation, for the fulfilment of the divine purpose of good towards ourselves and all mankind. It is, in effect, a prayer for the salvation, that is, for the highest good, of all men.[2]

Prayer may fittingly be regarded as an 'exercise' of the spirit (ἄσκησις), in so far as it means the use of a faculty which can only be educated by regularity, discipline and persevering effort. It is a work in which each element of our personality—body, mind, spirit—has a distinct share; each contributes to one and the same act of self-oblation.

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[1] Rom. viii. 28.

[2] Cyprian, *de orat. Dom.* xvii., speaks of this clause as 'precem pro omnium salute.'

Prayer has its distinct parts—self-examination and confession of sin, petition and intercession, thanksgiving and praise; but in each and all alike there is implied the surrender of will, the uplifting of the heart to God, the single-hearted desire that in and through ourselves and others the will of God may be accomplished. Thus prayer is no mere utterance of submission and resignation, still less a mere supplication for favours, but a form of *active consecration.* It embodies our desire to co-operate with the 'living Will' that underlies and controls the movement of the universe; our longing for deliverance from everything in ourselves or in others which hinders the coming of the divine kingdom.

Prayer may also be said to include meditation—'the union,' as it has been well defined, 'of Bible-reading and prayer'—which nourishes and invigorates the spirit of devotion. Further, it embraces the act of participation in common worship,[1] and the due use of the sacraments. Sacraments in particular bear witness to three important laws of the spiritual world. For, first, the life of union with God is a gift or grace *received;* the Christian character grows at every point by dependence upon the ascended Christ, who is Himself, through the operation of His Spirit, the primary agent in the entire process of sanctification. Secondly, the call to consecration includes the body and its functions. The institution of sacraments is an extension and

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[1] On the importance of public worship as an element in the training of the individual, see Rashdall, *op. cit.* ii. 300 foll.

perpetuation of the principle once for all manifested in the Incarnation—the hallowing of things earthly and common, the consecration of matter as the veil and channel of celestial gifts. Thirdly, the Christian life, in its essence, is *social*, and depends upon continuous fellowship with the Christian society. Just as baptism is the Christian's incorporation into a body,[1] and confirmation his initiation into the full privileges of membership in it; so the eucharist is a social meal, a symbol of fraternity[2]—a token and pledge of the fact that believers are all brethren gathered together in a single 'household of God,' which has common rules of discipline, common hopes and aims, social sacraments. Within the society, working through the instrumentality of divinely appointed ordinances, dwells the Spirit whose mission it is to make men *of one mind in an house*, and to bring them, through the unity of the body, to the peculiar perfection of which each individual is capable.[3]

Prayer holds its fundamental place, however, in the life of religion, because it is in reality an attitude of the spirit rather than a formal exercise. It is the voice of trustful faith, which always and everywhere

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[1] 1 Cor. xii. 13.

[2] 1 Cor. x. 17.

[3] *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 112. 1: 'In sacramentis novae legis quae derivantur a Christo, causatur gratia instrumentaliter quidem per ipsa sacramenta, sed principaliter per virtutem Spiritus sancti in sacramentis operantis, iuxta illud Joan. iii. 5.' Cp. Freeman, *Principles of divine service*, vol. i. ch. 2, § 3; Paget in *Lux Mundi*, 'The Sacraments'; Illingworth, *Christian Character*, ch. viii.; Gore, *The Body of Christ*, ch. i. and note 21 (pp. 316 foll.).

stays itself on God; it is the utterance of hope, seeking not the gifts of God, but His very self; it is the expression of love which aims at complete union of heart and will with God. Thus prayer is one of the great forces tending to bring about the extension of the divine kingdom—that is, the sphere in which God's will is embraced and fulfilled. It is the supreme aid to holiness because it implies the Godward direction of the entire life, the dedication of the will to the fulfilment of the divine purpose; and

> 'He always wins who sides with God.'

Fasting, in the most comprehensive sense of the word, means the discipline of the body, or rather of the will through the body, in order that it may become an apt and sensitive instrument of the spirit. Asceticism, rightly understood, does not imply mere self-restraint, or mere war against pleasure. Its aim is the restoration to the will of its rightful supremacy. *He that striveth for mastery*, says St. Paul, *is temperate*—exercises self-control—*in all things.*[1] Self-denial is, as we have seen, not an end in itself, but a means of true self-liberation from all that hinders the free and joyous service of God and man. The inculcation of self-denial as a duty is not, of course, peculiar to Christianity. It is a

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[1] 1 Cor. ix. 25: *πάντα ἐγκρατεύεται.* The virtue of *ἐγκράτεια* holds a very prominent place in the earliest Christian teaching (cp. Acts xxiv. 25). See Harnack, *The Expansion of Christianity* [E.T.], vol. i. p. 111.

prominent feature of Oriental religions; it holds a place in the system of the later Stoicism. Thinkers like Seneca, for example, face to face with the urgent moral needs of an enervated society, constantly preach a gospel of renunciation; emancipation of the soul from excessive dependence on external things; the strenuous life; the subjection of the flesh to the spirit.[1] Indeed, any religion which aspires to be in touch with the undeniable facts of life must contain an element of austerity. For the rule of self-denial, or self-mortification, corresponds to the actual condition of the world. It is a sacrificial way of sharing the sorrows of mankind; it is a powerful aid in the conflict with sin; it serves to correct anything like inordinate dependence on the conveniences and comforts of life; it is a means by which the soul attains to the moral severity, energy of will, clearness of spiritual insight, capacity for endurance, which are characteristic of the noblest types of manhood. This is the main point of the admirable chapter on fasting in the fifth book of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*.[2] Hooker brings out the two great aspects of fasting—its relation to sin as an outward expression of penitence, and its relation to the development of personality as a form of discipline. He points out the value of fasting 'even in public considerations': how it developes in men the athletic or martial temper, capacity to endure hardness, readiness for conflict and for labour,—qualities which are so obviously

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[1] See Seneca's *Epistles*, *passim*; cp. Juv. *Sat.* x. 357 foll.

[2] Bk. v. 72.

serviceable alike to nations and to churches. Early writers dwell more particularly on the personal or spiritual aspect of fasting. St. Leo, for example, regards it as the appropriate expression of true self-love, as a help to holiness, and specially as an aid to prayer.[1] But at all times Christian teachers have insisted on the importance of fasting as a condition of spiritual power, and of ability to bear the burdens or to meet the testing emergencies of life. It is scarcely needful to point out that the term 'fasting' is not to be restricted exclusively to abstinence from food. It implies self-repression and self-denial in regard to everything that threatens the inward unity of personality. Not only bodily instincts and passions, but speech, thought, imagination, social gifts and privileges, have to be brought under the control of the will by vigilant self-restraint. Accordingly, fasting may assume different forms or modes corresponding to varieties of temperament, vocation and opportunity. This is recognised by St. Bernard, in a well-known passage: 'If the appetite,' he says, 'has sinned, let that alone fast; but if other members, let them also fast: the eye from curious sights and wandering glances, from looking with pleasure at any mirror which reflects self; the ear from rumours, praise, slander, gossip, controversy; the tongue from detraction, murmuring, fault-finding, talking of self and of personal troubles; the hand from needless work which hinders

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[1] See esp. *serm. de Pass.* xix. 5, and *serm.* xli., xlv., xc. Bern. *in Quadr. serm.* iv. 2, has a fine passage on the close connection between fasting and prayer.

prayer; but, above all, the soul from vices and self-will.'[1]

This common-sense view of fasting may be supplemented by the further consideration that the voluntary curtailment of comforts and pleasures obviously has a *social* aspect. A Christian who steadily bears in mind the chronic condition of large classes of his fellow-men—their urgent needs and inevitable privations—will feel the imperative call to use the world as not using it to the full.[2]

It will have appeared that fasting is the practical exercise of Christian temperance. The discipline of self is a continuous and prolonged process; the state of grace is a warfare demanding the qualities of the soldier and the athlete, and the new personality can only attain to spiritual liberty through mortification of its lower impulses. Hence the ordinance of fasting forms a fixed and regular element in the practical system of the Church. But in this, as in other matters, the Church is content to bear witness to a great principle of the spiritual life, without laying down minute rules or overriding individual liberty. The holiness at which the Church aims is the holiness appropriate to membership in a body. No individual can be merely self-centred in his penitence; no gift of self-control can ultimately have other than a *social* object; the life of personal self-discipline is regulated by a consideration of the needs of the whole Christian brotherhood. From

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[1] *in Quadr. serm.* iii. 4. Cp. Bp. Westcott, *Lessons from Work*, pp. 269 foll.

[2] See 1 Cor. vii. 31.

this point of view submission to the ordinance of fasting forms a part of true loyalty to the Church. It is an effort to take a personal share in bearing the Church's burden and in promoting its efficiency.

Almsgiving stands in a close relation to fasting and prayer. Writers like St. Leo point out with great insistence that it should accompany fasting as its natural consequence, since by denying himself a Christian is better enabled to minister to the needs of others.[1] That almsgiving is a means of grace and 'assists prayer' is a commonplace of practical theology;[2] and from the very earliest times it has held a conspicuous place among characteristic Christian duties.[3] But the main motive for the fulfilment of this duty cannot be self-regarding. It is rather the impulse of compassion desirous of imitating Him who gives *simply*, and thereby

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[1] *serm.* xxxix.: 'Circa se abstinentior, circa pauperes effusior.' Greg. Mag. *de past. cura*, p. 3, xix.: 'Non enim Deo, sed sibi quisque ieiunat, si ea quae ventri ad tempus subtrahit, non egenis tribuit.' Cp. Rashdall, *op. cit.* ii. 71: 'The real needs of our fellow-men afford the completest scope for rational curtailment of the lower kinds of self-indulgence.'

[2] Cp. Cyp. *de op. et eleem.* 26; Iren. iv. 12. 5; Aug. *epist.* cxxx. 24; *Enchir.* lxxii. Lact. *div. inst.* vi. 13 says: 'Quod si mortalis condicio non patitur esse hominem ab omni macula purum, debent ergo largitione perpetua peccata carnis aboleri' (see St. Luke xi. 41).

[3] See Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity* [E.T.], i. 190 foll. The duty is specially insisted upon by Hermas (*e.g.* in *mand.* viii. 10), who, however, suggests elsewhere that almsgiving should be *indiscriminate* (διδοῦ ἁπλῶς μὴ διστάζων τίνι δῷς ἢ τίνι μὴ δῷς . . . μηθὲν διακρίνων, κ.τ.λ. *mand.* ii. 4 foll.). The responsibility, he says, lies with the receiver of the benefit, who is accountable for his act in accepting another's bounty.

teaches His children to give *with simplicity*,[1] that is, with generous recognition of another's need and with a free hand in ministering to it. Yet true almsgiving is also considerate and discriminating.[2] A Christian does not look to the New Testament for infallible rules of action in particular circumstances. He endeavours rather to drink more deeply, in proportion to the complexity of the demands made upon him, of the very spirit of his divine Master. He welcomes the advance of civilisation and the teachings of social experience as conveying a continuous revelation of God's mind and will; and in dealing with the problems of poverty and its attendant evils, he will eagerly avail himself of all that economic science or expert opinion can suggest. Old methods of almsgiving, useful enough in their day, will be discarded in favour of methods which present experience, founded upon more exact knowledge, proves to be the most effective in view of present-day needs. As the writer of *Ecce Homo* points out in his seventeenth chapter, the particular modes of philanthropy prescribed by the Gospel 'were suggested by the special conditions of that age. The same spirit of love which dictated them working in this age upon the same problems, would find them utterly insufficient. . . . It is now clear to all that a large part of human suffering is preventible by improved social arrangements. Charity will now, if it be genuine, fix upon this enterprise

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[1] St. James i. 5; Rom. xii. 8.

[2] Cp. p. 181.

as greater, more widely and permanently beneficial, and therefore more Christian than the other.'[1]

It is enough to have indicated this vital principle of true charity, without going into detail or specifying the particular forms which almsgiving should take in view of modern social conditions. It may, however, be suggested, in conclusion, that the foundation of wise philanthropy is based upon the principle of *stewardship*. A large proportion of the social distress and disorder which prevail in modern States has its roots in neglectful, unconscientious, or unscrupulous administration of business; in the absence of a sense of responsibility towards dependents and *employés;* in failure to fulfil the law of social duty which applies to matters like acquisition, expenditure, and payment of debts. Or, to speak more generally, we may say that inequalities of social condition are frequently the outcome of moral inconsistency in individual men, forgetful of the injunction to *render to all their dues*.[2] There is a familiar type of character which, in its zeal for philanthropic work, overlooks obligations which are nearest and most obvious. Life is not primarily a 'mission,' but a discipline; the growth of individual character and the well-being of society alike depend on the fulfilment, not merely of the tasks which excite our interest and enthusiasm, but of those which test humility, patience, and steadfast continuance in well-doing.

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[1] *Ecce Homo* (ed. 13), pp. 185 foll. Cp. Barnett, *The Service of God*, pp. 49 foll., 'Philanthropists and the Poor.'

[2] Rom. xiii. 7.

Almsgiving, like fasting and prayer, must have a *social* intention if it is to be in accord with the mind of the Church. Its *motive* is social. It is an act by which we acknowledge our responsibility towards all who are in any sense 'the poor.' But this duty extends far beyond the immediate relief of a pressing need. It does not 'begin and end with the gift.'[1] A true love of God, a true reverence for human personality, will guard us from partiality, impulsiveness and short-sightedness in the relief of poverty and pain. The frequent result of unintelligent and inconsiderate giving is not less wretchedness but more pauperism, more poverty of character, more greed, cunning and shiftlessness. The Christian is bound to consider the effect of what he does on character and life. Christ-like charity will be patient, reverent and far-sighted. It will aim not merely at the momentary relief of distress, but at the healing of the springs of life; in ministering to the need, it will not overlook the manhood, of the poor. It will deal with the distressed and degraded wisely and hopefully, regarding them as beings with a capacity for higher than bodily satisfaction. Like St. Peter, it will give them something better than silver or gold; it will bestow such as it has — attention, sympathy, honour, brotherly love.[2]

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[1] Peile, *The Reproach of the Gospel*, p. 120.

[2] See Barnett, *The Service of God*, esp. pp. 49 foll., 245 foll.

III

We have dealt briefly with the normal discipline of character, submitting itself to the teachings of common experience and to the moulding pressure of life in the divine society. It is unnecessary to speak more particularly of ecclesiastical discipline, penitential or ascetic, in the strictly technical sense. The Church has, theoretically, if not always in fact, power to inflict censures, to judge and punish offences, to separate offenders from her communion, to restore them on repentance; and of course all exercise of discipline has in view the interests of personal character and of social morality. The subject, however, is one that cannot be conveniently treated as a department of ethics. We may therefore confine ourselves to a consideration of the general result aimed at by the discipline of life as we have hitherto understood it. What is the goal to which the training of character tends?

At the outset we must bear in mind that in a real sense Christianity, so far from being outworn, has 'never yet been tried.' When it is asserted that the moral supremacy of Christendom is threatened by the fact that other religions are showing themselves capable of producing a higher type of character,[1] we can only reply that Christian principles have confessedly never yet been fairly and fully applied to the problems of personal, social and civic

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[1] See article in *Hibbert Journal* for October, 1905: 'Is the Moral Supremacy of Christendom in Danger?'

life. In other words, we are still oppressed by an 'astounding divorce between the ethical ideals of Christendom and its normal practice.' Our 'present imperfection' is a fact that cannot be gainsaid.[1] Yet the fact can only be fairly estimated in the light of the total Christian *idea* of human life; of the Christian *faith* in a God who, however slowly He works, cannot fail in some way to bring to accomplishment the purpose which He has revealed. There is a power at work in the world, a leaven concealed in the heart of humanity, which has already achieved more than we can easily grasp or measure; which *tends* to produce effects greater and more beneficent than anything of which mankind has yet had experience. We must claim that Christianity should be judged, not merely by its effects, vast as these are, but by its admitted and obvious tendencies.

However, we are at present concerned with ideals; and it would be foolish to overlook the fact that these ideals are continually being realised in fact, if not on any very striking scale.[2] We can boldly declare not merely what the normal result of a Christian training ought to be, but what in fact it frequently is—a character not stunted, barren, or one-sided, but full, rich and harmonious; a will putting forth energy in every direction; a life simplified by being brought under the control of a dominant motive and a single impulse. Character, if it means anything, means a disciplined will; and

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[1] Moberly, *The Atonement and Personality*, ch. xii.

[2] Cp. Liddon, *Bampton Lectures* (ed. 13), pp. 130, 131.

discipline is the secret of capacity, force, effectiveness. Through Christian personality the very Spirit of God lays hold, as it were, of the healthful and progressive elements in civilisation, and employs them in furtherance of the divine purpose. Regenerate personality is the great force through which He acts upon the world, combats what is evil, arrests deterioration, promotes growth, diffuses light. 'The advance of society,' it has been said, 'depends on the constant exertions of the good man; when he abandons these exertions, it drops back like lead.'[1]

And the goal towards which character, built up and daily renewed by the Spirit of grace, persistently advances, is *perfection*—a manhood 'perfect' at least in the sense that it exhibits a steadfastness of moral purpose which more and more tends to limit the possibility of defection, and which is itself a prophecy of the state to which belongs a final harmony between law and liberty, a complete subservience of body to the motions of spirit, an actual realisation in human nature of its ideal possibilities.[2] The teaching of Scripture thus corresponds to the analogy suggested by the process of evolution in nature. 'For the vision of a crystallised perfection

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[1] Words quoted by Church, *The Discipline of the Christian Character*, p. 108.

[2] Aug. *de civ.* xxii. 30. 3: 'Primum liberum arbitrium posse non peccare: novissimum non posse peccare'; *de fid. et symb.* xiii.: 'Spirituale corpus intelligitur quod ita spiritui subditum est ut caelesti habitationi conveniat.' Cp. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 475.

it substitutes that of an indefinite living growth'[1]—a growth which cannot rationally be supposed to be interrupted by bodily death. This is, indeed, the most vital and characteristic doctrine of Christian ethics—the truth

> . . . 'that man was made to grow, not stop;
> That help he needed once and needs no more,
> Having grown but an inch by, is withdrawn:
> For he hath new needs and new helps to these.
> This imports solely, man should mount on each
> New height in view; the help whereby he mounts,
> The ladder-rung his foot hath left, may fall,
> Since all things suffer change but God the Truth.'[2]

It must not, however, be forgotten that this climax of personal development is reached, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews implies,[3] by progressive self-surrender to a divine influence. The process of gradual assimilation to God which is the true law of human development, passes continually into new stages and attains to higher levels. But throughout, the advance *from glory to glory* depends upon the uninterrupted operation of the Spirit of holiness. Man is 'carried onwards' towards perfection; the crown of his development is a state of being in which he reflects the divine holiness, and enshrines, as in a temple, the divine presence.[4]

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[1] Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, i. p. 496.

[2] R. Browning, *A Death in the Desert.*

[3] Heb. vi. 1.

[4] Cp. Greg. Naz. *orat. theol.* xxx. § 6: *ἔσται δὲ ὁ Θεὸς τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τῆς ἀποκαταστάσεως, οὐχ ὁ πατὴρ . . . ἀλλ' ὅλος Θεὸς, ὅταν μηκέτι πολλὰ ὦμεν . . . ἀλλ' ὅλοι θεοειδεῖς, ὅλου Θεοῦ χωρητικοὶ καὶ μόνου.*

Meanwhile, the task of personality is to use and develope to the uttermost the spiritual energies of *the new man*, by daily mortification of all lower impulses, and daily self-consecration to the will and work of God. The will of man is required to *persist* in that condition of sanctifying union with Christ which the sacrament of baptism both represents and initiates. The conditions which render possible such persistence have been already described.[1] It depends, as we have seen, on the extent to which life is dominated by the spirit of prayer and the spirit of service; both being kindled and sustained by continual recollection of the divine Love which gives what it commands; which calls man to sanctity and enables him effectually to respond.

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[1] See p. 106.

PART III

DUTY AND THE MORAL LAW

CHAPTER XIII

THE CHRISTIAN LAW

> 'The Church has by divine appointment the power "to bind and to loose"; to pronounce that this is of obligation and that not; to lay down the great lines of moral duty, not negatively only, but positively, in accordance with the movement of life.'—WESTCOTT.

So far we have considered Christian virtue subjectively, as realised in Christian personality. 'Virtue' implies a certain state and attitude of the will, responding more or less perfectly to what moral law demands. But it is manifest that the good may also be contemplated objectively as *demand*, as *duty*, as that which a man 'ought' or is morally 'obliged' to do in view of the circumstances with which he has to deal. In an ideal state of personality the claim of duty would coincide with the inner impulse of the virtuous personality. In our actual state of imperfection 'duty' frequently conflicts with inclination, and the 'sense of duty' often acts as a motive, impelling the will to right action.

On the subject of obligation we have already touched; but the treatment of ethics would obviously be incomplete without some discussion

of the science of duty.[1] And the first point that calls for attention is the fact, so clearly distinctive of Christian ethics, that the law of duty is progressively *revealed* to man. The Gospel connects the moral law indissolubly with the personality of God, who is pleased to communicate to man, at periods and in ways of His own appointment, His mind and purpose. The natural law written on men's hearts coincides *with that which may be known of God*.[2] It is in a real sense a 'word' of God, an intelligible manifestation of His mind; and the demand which it makes is the expression of His will. But man's unfaithfulness to the dictates of the natural law rendered necessary a more objective and authoritative revelation of the moral ideal. This was conveyed through the agency of a special order of men, belonging to a race conscious from the first of a peculiar vocation. Through inspired organs Almighty God made known to the Hebrew people His moral requirement. He impressed on Israel the reality of law; but in the forefront of the legislation stood the elementary moral code contained in the decalogue—a code which in broadest outline defined the essential conditions of covenant-fellowship with God.

The law of Christ is, as we know, briefly comprehended in a twofold commandment;[3] but already in the Old Testament the essential unity

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[1] Cp. the Stoic definition of ethics: ἡ ἐπιστήμη τῶν καθηκόντων.

[2] Rom. i. 19.

[3] St. Matt. xx. 37.

of the Mosaic Law, regarded as a law of love, was perceived and declared;[1] and our Lord expressly asserted that He came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it.[2] Accordingly, we may take it for granted that the decalogue, as partly expounded in the Sermon on the Mount, contains a full and comprehensive outline of human duty. Its limitations are to be judged in the light of the ultimate purpose of God for mankind. He aimed from the first at a perfect morality and ultimately secured it; but grace submitted, as it were, to the guidance of wisdom, and the Law was communicated to Israel in a rudimentary form, adapted to the existing needs and actual capacities of the human race.[3] Yet the decalogue virtually embraces in broad outline the whole sphere of morality: it includes self-regarding duties and those which concern God and our neighbour. Its essential permanence and priority are implied in Christ's references to it; and Christian teachers have rightly maintained that all moral precepts can be reduced, *aliqua ratione*, to some particular portion of the 'ten words.'[4] All the commandments are, in fact, directed towards the fulfilment of the law of love. All alike tend towards the

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[1] Deut. vi. 5; x. 12.

[2] St. Matt. v. 17.

[3] Cp. Mozley, *Ruling Ideas in Early Ages*, p. 238. Irenaeus remarks that the Mosaic Law is in great measure a republication of the law of *nature* (iv. 16. 4). The same idea underlies the argument of Rom. ii. 14.

[4] Aquin. *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 100. 3.

life of fellowship or friendship with God.[1] All imply a living relationship on man's part, both to the Holy Being who reveals Himself in the law, and to human society, which forms, as it were, a single community subject to the sway of a divine Ruler and Head.[2]

Such is the ethical scope and aim of the decalogue; but its *form* is determined by its educational purpose. Hence it is primarily concerned with *action*, though it does not altogether ignore internal disposition.[3] Moreover, it is characteristic of the decalogue that it points back to grace. The very key-note of the sanctions affixed to the first five 'words'[4] is the conception of Jehovah as a merciful Deliverer. Israel's obligation to obey the moral law is rooted in the revealed character and redemptive love of God. He who requires man's service and obedience is Himself a gracious and righteous Being who seeks always

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[1] All, as Aquinas says, 'ordinantur ad caritatem.' Cp. Iren. iv. 16. 4: 'Decalogi quidem verba ipse per semetipsum omnibus similiter Dominus locutus est; et ideo similiter permanent apud nos, extensionem et augmentum sed non dissolutionem accipientia per carnalem eius adventum,' etc. Cp. iv. 16. 3: In the decalogue God is seen 'praestruens hominem in suam amicitiam.' Irenaeus is remarkable for his unique perception of the inner spiritual significance of the decalogue. See the passage iv. 12–16.

[2] *Summa*, *loc. cit.* art. 5 resp.: 'Praecepta legis divinae ordinant hominem ad quamdam communitatem seu rempublicam hominum sub Deo.'

[3] Consider the part played by the tenth commandment in the spiritual education of St. Paul (Rom. vii. 7 foll.).

[4] These sanctions were most probably added at a period much later than that of the original delivery of the Law.

and only the highest good of His creatures. What He ever aims at is the bringing of man into spiritual fellowship with Himself.

The decalogue, then, holds a permanent place in practical religion in virtue of its comprehensiveness as an outline of duty, and the spirituality of its intention. In short, the old law tends to precisely the same moral end as the 'new law' revealed in Christ, namely, the all-inclusive principle of *love.*[1]

But it may be inquired how far we are justified in speaking of the Gospel as a 'new law'? There can be no doubt that the conception of Christ as 'legislator,' and of the Christian dispensation as the delivery of a 'new law,' has from early times taken deep root, particularly in western catholicism.[2] The idea is specially characteristic of Aquinas, and the Council of Trent went so far as to anathematise the statement that 'Christ was given to mankind as a redeemer and not also as a legislator.'[3] The legalistic or juristic conception of the Gospel gained strength in proportion to the development of that theory of the Church which regarded it as a *societas perfecta*, distinct from the State, and having at its disposal all needful resources of government,—a theory which appears in germ in the writings of Augustine, but which has been expanded in

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[1] 1 Tim. i. 5. Cp. Aquinas, *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 107. 1.

[2] See *ep. Barn.* ii. 6; Justin M. *dial. c. Tryph.* xi. 228 B (with Otto's note). The idea is, however, already present in St. Matthew's Gospel. Cp. Burkitt, *The Gospel History and its Transmission*, pp. 188 foll.

[3] *Sess.* vi. 21.

comparatively recent times.[1] One consequence of this movement of thought has been the retention in the moral theology of the Roman Church of a strong element of legalism. With this fact we are not here concerned. We may, however, point out that the idea of the Gospel as a 'new law' must be received with considerable caution and reserve, lest we should encourage the tendency to seek in the New Testament *positive precepts* on all matters of human duty, 'even so far as to the taking up of a rush or straw.'[2] In a true sense, no doubt, our Lord is a 'legislator,' proclaiming the law of duty to the citizens of His kingdom; but He is perhaps more accurately described as the interpreter, or even the living embodiment of law; in the phrase of Lactantius, He is Himself *viva praesensque lex.* St. Paul speaks of himself as being 'under law to Christ';[3] but the Christian law is also described as the 'law of the Spirit of life'—a rule in which authority is inseparably connected with the gift of grace; a law which, instead of killing, gives life; instead of condemning, justifies.[4] The 'new law' *is* in effect the inwardly operating grace of the Holy Spirit.[5]

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[1] See Bishop Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, pp. 214, 345 foll. Bishop Robertson says that the theory is 'the characteristic and key-note of the modern Jesuit conception of the Church.' Cp. Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma* [E.T.], vii. 101 foll.

[2] Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* ii. 1. 2 (quoting T. Cartwright).

[3] 1 Cor. ix. 21: ἔννομος Χριστοῦ.

[4] Rom. viii. 2. Cp. 2 Cor. iii. 6; and Iren. iv. 34. 4: '*Vivificatrix lex* in universam exivit terram.'

[5] *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 106. 1 concl.: 'Lex nova principaliter ipsa

When, therefore, we speak of the Gospel as a *new law*, we only imply, first, that it contains a more ample revelation of duty; secondly, that it introduces a new power to fulfil what the law enjoins. The 'new law' is given to men who are endued with a *new spirit*. Thus the relation of the 'new law' to conscience is different to that of the old law. The Gospel law is not a rule which condemns, but a rule which aids the will.[1] It changes 'the absolute without us in the form of Law to the absolute within us in the form of Spirit.'[2] It is the presence of the Spirit in men's hearts which imparts the principle of love; that love which is the fulfilling of the law and the end of the commandment.[3] The new law is in fact *explicitly* what the old law was *implicitly*: a law of love.

Further, the personality of the Lawgiver is more completely disclosed in the new than in the old law. *It was said to them of old time* is less explicit than *I say unto you*. Christ, who gives the law, presents Himself not only as standing in a judicial relation to the conscience, but also as embodying in His own Person the moral ideal which He proclaims. The actual scope and meaning of obligation is interpreted by a living pattern of righteousness. Moreover, the law is illustrated and enlarged by the *deeds* of Christ.

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gratia est Spiritus Sancti in corde fidelium scripta'; and art. 2 concl.: 'Lex evangelica cum sit ipsa Spiritus Sancti gratia, necessario hominem justificat.'

[1] Rom. viii. 2.

[2] Du Bose, *The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 24.

[3] Aug. *de spir. et litt.* 36 (referring to Rom. v. 5; xiii. 10; 2 Cor. iii. 3; 1 Tim. i. 5).

He is Himself the Christian law.[1] He fulfils it in act by submitting to its requirements, and so *fulfilling all righteousness;* in teaching, by expounding its full significance and by tracing sin to its source in the will of man. The moral law thus undergoes an infinite extension in the 'new law.' It is seen to be all-embracing in scope. It regulates the hidden movements of thought and desire;[2] it implies that in a sense duty is unconditional and does not admit of degrees. There is in the abstract no such thing as a collision of duties. In particular cases, where circumstances are complex or obscure, it may be hard to determine what duty is; but though strictly relative to conditions and opportunities, duty is always one.[3] Hence our Lord attributes supreme importance to the 'single eye'—that clear and steady perception of the true end of life, which is the best guide in matters of conduct, and which is able intuitively *to approve the things that are excellent;* that is (as Bengel tersely explains), to choose in deciding on a course of action, *non modo prae malis bona, sed in bonis optima.*

Accordingly, in calling the Gospel the 'new law,' we do not commit ourselves to a legalistic view of morality. The Christian law differs from the ancient law in being affirmative and positive, rather than negative. It does not so much prohibit

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[1] See *Ecce Homo*, ch. x.; and cp. Lact. iv. 17. 25.

[2] Tert. *de paen.* iii.: 'Denique Dominus quemadmodum se adiectionem legi superstruere demonstrat, nisi et voluntatis interdicendo delicta?'

[3] Cp. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 324.

particular kinds of action as lay down certain comprehensive spiritual principles. It delineates in outline a certain ideal of manhood, and in so doing makes a moral demand which embraces all possible relationships in which personality may be placed, and every imaginable variety of circumstances. The question for a Christian brought face to face with conflicting moral possibilities is not 'What does the law of Christ command me to do?' but 'How would Christ act in these particular circumstances?' The answer to this question is by no means invariably easy or obvious; but the very difficulty is intended to lead the Christian to habitual reliance, not on the letter of the New Testament, but on the Spirit of Him by whom the law was perfectly fulfilled. In other words, the revelation of human duty conveyed first in the natural law written in the conscience and reason of man, next in the 'supernatural law' contained in Scripture, is carried to a culminating point in the manifestation of Him who is the true 'Light of the world.' And the Incarnation is perpetuated and extended in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of the Incarnate is ever at work in the world, taking of the things of Christ, and showing them to the Church;[1] leading individual men to enlarge their moral ideas, or to reconsider their methods of moral action in accordance with the needs and circumstances of each generation. The Spirit reveals in the actual life of mankind, individual and social—*the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*[2] Thus there can be

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[1] St. John xvi. 15.

[2] Rom. xii. 2.

no final and complete statement of human duties; all are summed up in one comprehensive law of love which is of inexhaustible significance, and is bound to find ever fresh fulfilment in new spheres and relationships. The teachings of human experience form an integral part of revelation; we learn the will of God in the events of history, in the discoveries of science, in the social phenomena of each successive age. And as the revelation is continuous, the moral demand that it makes tends to be constantly expanded; for its ultimate scope and purpose is nothing less than the sanctification of every human relationship, the redemption of every element of civilisation, the transfiguration of all life by lifting it into conscious fellowship with God.[1] *The Spirit*, writes St. Paul, *searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*[2]

For ascertaining the actual content of the law, the decalogue supplies a natural basis of division, since it embraces in outline the different spheres of duty: man's duty to God, to his neighbour, to his own personality, and towards the non-personal creation. Aquinas follows Augustine in distinguishing two series of commandments—three relating to God, and seven to man.[3] To God we owe what is due to the moral Ruler of human society (*princeps*

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[1] See Bp. Westcott's Charge (1892): *The Incarnation a revelation of human duties.*

[2] 1 Cor. ii. 10.

[3] This arrangement is secured by combining the *first* with the *second* commandment, and by distinguishing two separate precepts in the *tenth* (*Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 100. 5).

communitatis), namely, faithfulness, reverence, and love. The third (our fourth) commandment embodies the principle that man is bound to give up a definite portion of his time to divine worship.[1] To his neighbour a man behaves as he ought, *specialiter*, by paying his due to each (4); *generaliter*, by doing no injury to any in deed (5, 6, 7), word (8), or thought (9 and 10). Duties implied in right self-love are omitted, because (says Aquinas) a man loves himself aright in so far as he directs his whole life Godward.[2] Aquinas omits, however, to point out that the principle of duty extends to the non-personal sphere with which man is in contact. Such duty is apparently implied in the law of the sabbath, which ordains that 'cattle' are to share in the benefit of the sabbatic rest. And this falls in with numerous injunctions which imply the sacredness of the physical order and the limitations under which man is allowed to exercise his dominion over nature.[3]

In the following chapters we shall consider more at large what the Christian law, interpreted by our present and past experience, practically demands. Let it suffice at this point to describe, in the language of a justly revered modern teacher, the exact meaning of the phrase 'Christian law.'

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[1] *Summa*, *l.c.*, art. 3. Cp. Iren. iv. 16. 1: 'Sabbata perseverantiam *totius diei* erga Deum deservitionis edocebant' (*i.e.* the consecration of all our time is implied in the dedication of a portion).

[2] *Summa*, *l.c.*, art. 5 ad 1: 'In hoc homo vere se diligit quod se ordinat in Deum.'

[3] Cp. *Lux Mundi*, 488.

'The Christian law,' says Bishop Westcott, 'is the embodiment of the truth for action in forms answering to the conditions of society from age to age. The embodiment takes place slowly, and it can never be complete. . . . In each generation the obligation is laid on Christians to bring new problems of conduct and duty into the divine light, and to find their solution under the teaching of the Spirit.'[1]

Christian ethics are concerned with those broad and unchangeable principles which it is the task of each generation to apply to their own immediate problems. But there is a continual need that these principles should be stated afresh, since they are apt to be quickly forgotten or obscured; and it is the mission of the Christian Church in each age so to make the truth of the Gospel shine forth anew that the nations may continually *walk amidst the light thereof.*[2]

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[1] Presidential Address to C. S. U. (Manchester, Nov. 25, 1895).

[2] Rev. xxi. 24.

CHAPTER XIV

CHRISTIAN DUTY

'Erga Deum dilectionem praecipiebat, et eam quae ad proximum est iustitiam insinuabat, ut nec iniustus nec indignus sit Deo: praestruens hominem per decalogum in suam amicitiam, et eam quae circa proximum est concordiam.'—IRENAEUS.

THE Christian law may be considered in two aspects: first, as regulating man's personal duty in the fulfilment of his social relationships; secondly, as manifesting itself in the organisation and expansion of what are sometimes called 'the moral communities.' The kingdom of God is primarily a moral ideal realised in the *individual;* but it also attains to a visible embodiment in the organised life of human society—in those spheres in which the individual escapes from his isolation and satisfies his instinct for fellowship. There is a characteristic Christian conception of the Family, the State, the Church,—communities in which individual character is trained for a larger and richer life than that of earth. These fundamental institutions are types and prophecies of a social consummation to which each contributes, and in which each is destined to find its counterpart. Ethics are concerned with these social groups on their earthly and transitory side.

All that we know of the 'consummation' is that present limitations will have disappeared. What idea can we form of a family wherein *they neither marry nor are given in marriage?* of a community *wherein dwelleth righteousness?* of a church out of which are finally gathered *all things that offend?* of nations walking *amidst the light* of a holy city? Ethics deal with facts of life and human nature which point beyond themselves to a world of spiritual realities in which *it is not yet made manifest what we shall be.*[1]

In the present chapter, and in that which follows it, we shall consider the sphere of personal duty. Life for the individual means the due fulfilment of his personal relationships as a member of a society whose Author and Head is God Himself.[2] It is with different aspects of this relationship that the decalogue is concerned. In the Christian law it is so expanded as to embrace all forms of personal obligation: it regulates the duty of man to God, to his neighbour, to himself, and to the non-personal realm which for the most part is subject to his control.

I

Duty towards God in a sense, of course, embraces the whole of duty; for faith, the foundation of the Christian life, means the Godward direction of the entire life and a single-hearted purpose to serve and please an unseen Master. Certainly

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[1] 1 St. John iii. 2.

[2] *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 100. artt. 3 and 4.

'the service of man is the service of God.' But the *personal relationship* in which man stands to God implies certain separate and particular obligations. The *first and great commandment* includes, for instance, such duties as these :—

(i.) *Due recollection of God. Thou shalt have none other gods.* This corresponds to the fundamental doctrine of ethics, that God Himself is the chief Good—the only perfectly satisfying Good—for man, the only adequate object of his love and devotion. The typical violation of the first commandment, and the root of all other sin, is the refusal of men *to have God in their knowledge*,[1] their tendency to seek the object of their service and affection in *themselves*, or in something that is not God.[2] As Augustine points out in a memorable passage of the *Confessions*, all the goods which men vainly strive to secure by different kinds of sin are to be found in their perfection in God. 'Thus,' he says, 'the soul seeks apart from Thee those things which it cannot find in their purity and simplicity save by returning to Thee.'[3] To 'have God' is to live in subjection to His will, and to find in Him the answer to every aspiration and prayer.[4] The recollection of what God is to the soul is in itself a powerful incentive to

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[1] Rom. i. 28 : οὐκ ἐδοκίμασαν τὸν θεὸν ἔχειν ἐν ἐπίγνωσει.

[2] Athan. *c. Gent.* iii. (describing the Fall) says : τῶν μὲν νοητῶν ἀπέστησαν ἑαυτῶν τὸν νοῦν, ἑαυτοὺς δὲ κατανοεῖν ἤρξαντο, κ.τ.λ. Cp. *de Incarn.* iv., v.

[3] *Conf.* ii. 6. 13.

[4] Aug. *de beat. vit.* 12 : 'Deum habet qui facit quae Deus vult fieri.'

goodness.[1] Therefore, to 'have' God and His will ever before his eyes, to fear God in the sense of acknowledging Him and taking His presence into account in every transaction of life, is at once man's primary duty and his highest blessedness. At the very outset, the revealed law implies the dignity of man's calling, and the essential connection of goodness with happiness.

The duty of recollection is no easy one to fulfil in days like our own. The absorbing struggle for existence and the consequent growth of practical materialism; the race for wealth or pleasure; the immense pressure of secular interests and occupations;—all these tend to exclude the thought of God, so that it ceases to be a restraining or elevating force in the lives of vast multitudes of men. It was the work of the prophets to keep alive in Israel *the light of the Lord.* So it is the duty of every Christian, by all means in his power, to 'give vitality to the thought of God'—by prayer, by personal example, by supporting every effort to extend the work and influence of the Church. Just as the Church is the *pillar and ground of the truth,*[2] or, in other words, guarantees by its very existence the truth and the permanence of Christian ideas, so the duty of each individual Christian is to bear *witness* to the truth in deed and word. This is not the function of a special order only, but of every member of the Church, in respect of the priesthood which is

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[1] Cyr. Hieros. *catech.* vi. 7: *αὔταρκες ἡμῖν εἰς εὐσέβειαν ἔσται τοῦτο μόνον, τὸ εἰδέναι ὅτι θεὸν ἔχομεν.*

[2] 1 Tim. iii. 15.

rightfully his. Each is called, in opposition to the materialistic tendencies of modern civilisation, to make the presence of God *felt* in the ordinary business and intercourse of life—'to make Him a reality, and the most powerful reality to the soul.'[1]

(ii.) *A just and worthy conception of God:* the steadfast refusal to entertain false or degrading notions of His character, or to impute to Him what is contrary to our highest moral ideas.[2] Men are apt to think of God as being such an one as themselves, and thus fall into a kind of idolatry. Bernard dwells impressively on the evil effects of such *ignorantia Dei.* Those who know not God are driven to despair. They imagine Him who is kind to man, to be harsh and severe; Him who is pitiful, to be relentless and implacable; Him who is altogether worthy of love, to be dark and terrible. Thus, he says, iniquity lies to itself, and sets up an idol in the place of God.[3] Hence arise not only false theologies, but false ideas in morals—false notions of what is good and of what is best worth pursuing in life; the idolatries of civilised man—the worship of wealth, knowledge, pleasure, nature, art, literature,

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[1] See the impressive discourse on 'The Christian Ministry' (based on St. Luke iv. 32) by W. E. Channing. Cp. Dorner, *System of Christian Ethics*, § 55.

[2] Greg. Nyss. *orat. catech.* xix. insists on the need of entertaining εὐσεβεῖς περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπολήψεις. These he defines more particularly in xx.

[3] Bern. *in Cant.* xxxviii. 2. Cp. Plutarch's definition of 'superstition' (δεισιδαιμονία): πολυπάθεια [πρὸς τὸ θεῖον] κακὸν τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὑπονοοῦσα (*de superst.* v.).

political ideals such as 'liberty,' 'progress,' 'equality.'[1] Against this readiness to transfer to objects lower than God the allegiance due to Him alone, we are warned by the first and second commandments. Such forms of idolatry are perilous in proportion as they tend to absorb the interest and energies of men, to alienate them from the one supreme object of love and service,[2] and to obstruct the avenues by which truth gains access to the soul.

(iii.) *The care of the tongue*, recollection of the sacredness of speech, is an aspect of the duty we owe to God. The New Testament lays particular stress on this point.[3] Speech has a sacred function to fulfil in human life, and it is to be ever controlled by a sense of accountability to One who is the unseen witness of the words and deeds of men. An oath in a court of justice is a solemn way of affirming the presence of God.[4] Our Lord, indeed, seems to teach that an oath is a concession to human infirmity, to be classed, as Augustine points out, *non in bonis, sed in necessariis;* and the employment of it is justifiable only as a public recognition of the supreme importance of truth.[5] The duty

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[1] Cp. Church, *Cathedral and University Sermons*, No. xii. (pp. 154 foll.), for a fine expansion of this thought.

[2] Erasmus says, in a vigorous passage of the *Enchiridion:* 'Aequasti Christo pecuniam si ea te potest felicem aut infelicem reddere.'

[3] St. Matt. xii. 36; Eph. iv. 29; St. James iii.

[4] Aug. *de serm. Dom. in monte*, i. 17: 'Jurat qui adhibet testem Deum.' Cp. Jer. iv. 2.

[5] St. Matt. v. 34 foll. Cp. Butler, *Serm.* iv. 'Upon the government of the tongue.'

of truthfulness is, in fact, to be connected with man's relationship, not only to his neighbour, but to God. If truth in speech and in dealings is part of the debt we owe to our fellow-men,[1] it is also an element in that imitation of the divine character to which we are called. We are to *speak the truth* (rather, *to be true*) *in love*, and so to reflect in ourselves the simplicity of Him who is the simplest of all Beings.[2] The earliest Christian allusion to this duty (outside the New Testament) is contained in a curious passage of Hermas, which illustrates our point: 'Love truth and let all truth proceed from thy mouth, that the spirit which God made to dwell in this flesh of thine may be found of all men true, and so the Lord that dwelleth in thee may be glorified. For they that lie deny the Lord, and defraud the Lord, not rendering again to Him the deposit which they received, to wit, a spirit that doth not lie.'[3] The law of inward truth is binding upon man as made in the image of God, and sincerity both in language and in work is an essential element in that love which is *the fulfilling of the law*. It is needless here to discuss those apparent exceptions to the rule of truthfulness in speech which are commonly held to be permissible in special circumstances. A certain self-accommodation to such circumstances is justifiable if love (in the true sense) requires it; if 'the lips remain true to the

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[1] Eph. iv. 25.

[2] Eph. iv. 15. Cp. Aug. *Conf.* ii. 6. 13.

[3] Hermas, *mand.* iii. Cp. Greg. Nyss. *orat. cat.* xxxiv.: ὥσπερ γὰρ ἑκάστου τῶν ὄντων ἐστί τις ἰδιότης ἡ τὴν φύσιν γνωρίζουσα· οὕτως ἴδιόν ἐστι τῆς θείας φύσεως ἡ ἀλήθεια.

deeper purpose and willed character of the man.'[1] In cases where utterance of the truth is opposed to love, truthfulness may have to yield to a higher duty. In such cases the primary intention is not to deceive, but to render to another the service which he seems at the moment to need; and this by using speech not as an end but as an instrument. It is in respect of this habitual and permanent good will that man is morally akin to God. Thus while the general principle seems to be plain, it is obvious that there is a class of exceptions which require casuistical treatment. Our present point, however, is that the duty of veracity is not merely dictated by social affection, but by the consciousness of relationship to God. It is a part of true reverence. It implies the constant sense of a Presence in the world that keeps watch over the deeds and takes account of the words of men.[2]

(iv.) *The duty of work. Six days shalt thou labour.* A man's work is the chief element in the discipline of his character. It is by this that he tends to become what he is called to be. The duty of work is, in fact, closely connected with the whole idea of vocation. It is not merely a service rendered to the community of our fellow-men, but an effort to correspond to a divine ideal for the individual life.[3] This is implied in the parables of the talents

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[1] Newman Smyth, *Christian Ethics,* p. 391 (see the whole context).

[2] See Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory* (ed. 3), vol. ii. pp. 255 foll.

[3] See Eph. ii. 10. Cp. Cunningham, *The Gospel of Work,*

and of the pounds; and it is this which gives a religious significance to what is called the 'labour question.' Thus the anti-social evasion of work, which makes men content to lead a life of idleness, or eager to make money without personal toil or adequate return (gambling), is a sin against God, the result of which is the impoverishment of personal character, and an undue restriction of the area of social well-being. Just as a deliberate lie is an outrage done to God rather than to man,[1] so wilful idleness is the fraudulent misuse of a divinely entrusted stewardship.

(v.) The same commandment which lays down the law of work prescribes *the duty of worship*. The question has been raised whether Christian ethics can be supposed to include specifically 'religious' duties. The answer is that such duties are implied in the essential relationship between God and the soul. To God we owe whatever can conceivably be due to a Being who not only has solemn rights over us, but whose purpose is to educate us for a life of unbroken fellowship with Himself. We owe to Him the habitual recollection, the homage, the surrender of will, which are implied in such a relationship. Worship in its widest sense means a perpetual recognition of the presence of God, and an attitude of constant dependence upon Him. And this is the duty enjoined by the fourth commandment. The ceremonial element in it, the

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pp. 39 foll.; Westcott, *The Incarnation a revelation of human duties*, pp. 21, 22.

[1] Acts v. 4.

particular *taxatio temporis* which it prescribes, is unessential. The broad principle is laid down that the divine claim extends to the whole of life—a claim which is acknowledged by the separation and dedication of a *portion* of time to His special service.[1] To this general purpose the law of recreation or rest is subservient. For nearly three centuries the Christian Sunday does not seem to have been observed by any cessation of work; but *worship* being from the earliest times the main purpose of the day, the opportunity for it was found to be best secured by abstinence from labour.

Worship, however, according to the Christian idea, is not so much a formal action as a spirit, or habit of mind. It is the habit of seeing 'God in all things and all things in God,' acknowledging and reverencing the tokens of His presence, whether in nature or in humanity. For, as Channing says, 'God dwells in every human being more intimately than in the outward creation.' The human soul is 'His chosen sanctuary';[2] and to *honour all men* is the practical fulfilment of the law of worship in daily life. He worships most acceptably who, like Christ, goes about *doing good*, who is eager 'to espouse all human interests, to withstand all wrong, to uphold all right'—in a word, to lead

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[1] The law of the sabbath, in fact, illustrates one of the leading ideas of the Mosaic system—that of election, separation, consecration. 'Through all the provinces of human life the same idea ran, namely, that God claimed the world as His own' (Eyton, *The Ten Commandments*, 59).

[2] W. E. Channing, *Discourse on Christian Worship.*

all whom he can reach to the knowledge and love of God. Worship is the act by which man yields himself up to share in the saving and redemptive work of the Creator. *My Father worketh even until now*, said our Lord in answer to the charge of breaking the sabbath, *and I work!*[1]

Thus the fourth commandment forms a connecting link between the two 'tables of the law.' Duty towards God embraces the service of man. So we pass on to consider the general social obligations resulting from the one comprehensive law of love.

II

In considering the Christian character, we touched upon four fundamental principles which regulate the behaviour of an ideal Christian to his fellows: the principles of forgiveness, of sacrifice, of service, of idealism. The law of social duty prescribes the different ways in which these principles should be applied to the actual conditions of life. It is obvious that these conditions are liable to vary at different periods; and each generation of Christians needs to determine, by studying afresh the precepts of the Gospel, the particular forms of action to which present needs and circumstances point the way. The moral law embraces, as we have seen, every conceivable relationship, and consequently its range and scope is continually being enlarged. If the maxim of Augustine be

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[1] St. John v. 17.

true, *Proximus est omni homini omnis homo*,[1] man owes 'duties' extending beyond the limits of the family, the class, the city, the state, the church, which claims him. 'There is no one in the human race to whom love is not due, if not in conformity with the law of mutual charity, yet at least in accordance with the bond of a common nature.'[2] Christianity, in fact, spiritualises every impulse which draws a man to his fellow and brings it within the range of moral obligation. The common needs of men in society involve mutual claims and duties; and in the fulfilment of his own special function each individual is bound to consider the interests not only of the whole community, but of every other individual. Moreover, he is required to take into account the inequalities of condition, physical or moral, which prevail in human society. The poor, whatever be the precise form of their need, will have a special claim on him. The sense of corporate responsibility will quicken sympathy and the spirit of service, Thus 'the socialism which involves a conflict of interests' will be transformed into 'the socialism which rests upon the consciousness of a spiritual unity and a common goal.'[3]

In His expansion of the decalogue our Lord

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[1] Aug. *de disc. Chr.* iii. See above, p. 179.

[2] Aug. *epist.* cxxx. 13. Professor T. H. Green observes that the doctrine of the responsibility of every one for every one ('each his own master, yet each his brother's keeper') has first been grasped, and an attempt made to act upon it, in modern Christendom (*Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 271, p. 330).

[3] Harnack, *The Expansion of Christianity* [E.T.], i. 184.

extends indefinitely the law of social duty. But He refrains from giving detailed or precise precepts. He enjoins certain typical kinds of social action, which He illustrates in His own dealings with men. But the ideal which He upholds is one which under the continuous guidance of His Spirit has to be progressively applied to the particular circumstances of each age.

Accordingly Christ's method of dealing with the existing social order of His day needs to be attentively considered by modern Christians,[1] but always with an eye to present requirements and opportunities. They must take account of economic facts and laws, *i.e.* the generalisations of experience respecting the tendencies at work in human society;[2] but their practical task is to judge of these tendencies in the light of Christ's teaching, and so far as possible to make the Christian spirit and temper an effective force among other (so-called) economic forces.

We are familiar with the change that has passed over economics during the past thirty years. The idea that the individual is influenced only by

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[1] This is the main purpose of Professor Peabody's valuable book, *Jesus Christ and the Social Question* (The Macmillan Co.).

[2] Cp. Ashley, *Economic History*, bk. 2, ch. vi. p. 387: 'Modern English economists have usually assumed that every man is guided by self-interest . . . by the desire of wealth. They explain that in so doing they do not imply any moral approbation of such motives. They take human nature as they find it, and this assumption, they urge, is sufficiently near the truth to serve as a basis for reasoning. . . . Their attitude as economists is one of mere observation.'

self-interest has been discredited by a deeper insight into human character; moreover, the actual conditions of modern life have thwarted and repressed even the action of self-interest. It has been discovered that freedom to pursue their own interests is absolutely denied to multitudes of men.[1] The unfettered individualism of the few has practically resulted in the exploitation of the many. The idea of private ownership and of the 'rights' of property has been mischievously exaggerated, with the result that the general welfare has been sacrificed. The accumulation of wealth has been regarded as the one sufficient aim of individual effort; the practical consequence of which has been a fearful misdirection of energy, a great impoverishment of character, and an immeasurable waste of human life. And far more dangerous to the well-being of nations than the 'State-blindness' which habitually subordinates the interests of the community to the private acquisition of wealth, has been the 'God-blindness' which regards commercial transactions as lying outside the control of religion; which treats human nature as a mere means; which, in the absorbing pursuit of material wealth, has lost the sense of accountability to a *living God*.[2]

The new political economy has, in some measure

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[1] Cp. the valuable Report on the 'Moral Witness of the Church on Economic Subjects,' presented to Convocation, 1907.

[2] 1 Tim. vi. 17. The phrases 'State-blindness,' 'God-blindness,' are used by Mr. H. G. Wells in his book, *The Future of America*. The same writer's *New Worlds for Old* may be mentioned in this connection.

at any rate, taken account of these things, and has come to recognise the importance of character, and of well-being both physical and mental, as a social force. It has taught us with new emphasis that *a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*[1] It has brought into prominence the fact that morality is essentially social, and that each individual is bound to consider the bearing of what he is and does on the interests of the entire community. These are commonplaces, no doubt, but they are still widely ignored in practice ; consequently, it is the *social aspect* of duty which needs to be chiefly insisted upon in view of present conditions. Not, indeed, that it is practically possible to draw any clear line between the two spheres of personal and social effort. To be a Christian in the fullest sense is to be a Churchman ; in other words, it is to realise one's dependence upon, and obligations to, a *society ;* it means a progressive education in the spirit of brotherhood and service ; it implies willingness on the part of each individual to secure for all, as for himself, due opportunities of fulfilling their true function and developing their best capacities. The Church, as it now exists, is not coextensive with the kingdom of God, but is the main instrument by which it is extended and consolidated. And the Churchman is inspired by the thought that in all his moral or spiritual activity he is working for that ideal state of human society which is an element—the main element—in the idea of the kingdom of God. In the fulfilment of

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[1] St. Luke xii. 15.

personal duty he contributes in his measure to the formation of a perfect human society—a society conformed to the will of God because permeated by the spirit of truth, righteousness and brotherly love.

The following social duties seem to be implied in the fundamental law of love: *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

1. The duty of *hopefulness*, of recognising the good elements in the existing social order, appears to follow from serious belief in the providence of God. The earliest Christian teachers, following the lead of the apostles, frankly acknowledged the healthful and stable elements in the old order. They recognised the divine sanction and august functions of the State; they discouraged anything like revolutionary or anarchic movements; they preached loyalty to the *powers that be* as having been *ordained by God.* They believed in a purpose of good controlling human institutions, however imperfect, and guiding the entire movement of society. This faith, or hope, is a part of Christian duty. The present social and industrial order is not built up merely by the selfish and competitive instincts of mankind.[1] Revolutionary socialism is too often the product of despair because it is allied with an anti-religious denial of God and a low estimate of human nature. To a Christian eye, on the contrary, it appears that the very permanence and continuance of the existing order has hitherto depended on the prevalence in society of certain moral virtues—

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[1] So F. D. Maurice used to teach. See Bishop C. Stubbs, *Social Teaching of the Lord's Prayer*, p. 17.

integrity, patience, industry, prudence. It would be foolish to undervalue the importance of this 'diffusive morality,'[1] which owes so much to Christian opinion, influence and training. Experience teaches unmistakeably that character is the chief social force, and that success in industrial enterprise depends, in the long run, upon the extent to which honesty, veracity, sobriety, diligence and mutual good will prevail in the business world, that is, in society organised for the production and exchange of wealth. The moral transformation of the industrial order can only come about through the gradual extension of the Christian spirit, controlling and purifying the instincts and tendencies which have created that order. The problem involved in social contrasts and inequalities will not be solved by heroic remedies of a political kind, but by that spirit of hopefulness and patience which presses for immediate and practicable reforms. Hence arises the obvious duty of helping forward any movement designed to rouse or quicken public conscience in regard to such matters as temperance, proper housing, sanitation, and other physical conditions of modern industry. Apathy is inexcusable in a Christian.[2] Meanwhile we are bound to recognise the special virtues that are usually characteristic

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[1] The contrast between the 'embodied' and the 'diffusive' influence of Christianity is admirably drawn out by the Bishop of Southwark (Dr. Talbot), in his second Visitation Charge, *The Church's Failures and the Work of Christ* (Macmillan, 1903).

[2] Cp. Peabody, *op. cit.* ch. vi.; Newman Smyth, *Christian Ethics*, pp. 459 foll. Professor G. A. Smith, in an interesting passage of *The Twelve Prophets* (i. 430 f.), takes a highly optimistic

of an industrial people, and to make much of any elements in the present order which are tending to develope Christian self-reliance, fidelity, thoroughness and veracity. 'Hard judgments of human character and human institutions,' it has been said, 'are generally false and always shallow. The helper of mankind recognises the good in that which he would change, and finds room for it in the greater good he would bring into the world.'[1]

2. From the fundamental principle of brotherhood revealed by Christ follows the comprehensive duty of Christian *justice.* Men are members one of another; each individual is an end in himself; and each is bound to consider how his conduct will affect others, however far removed from him in *status*, or even in nationality.[2] The principle of social justice implies that the good of all is the good of each; that 'every one is to count for one, and no one for more than one';[3] that, consequently, every one has rights which it is every one's duty to respect. Justice requires a constant effort on the part of all to secure for each full freedom of opportunity for useful work and a happy life; its aim is to distribute as widely and equally as possible whatever good can be secured by the collective efforts of human society. So far Christianity shares the aims and hopes of true socialism.

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view of the business life. He speaks of trade and industry as 'among the greatest instruments of the truth which maketh free.'

[1] Professor Henry Jones in *The Working Faith of a Social Reformer* (*Hibbert Journal*, vol. 4, no. 1, October, 1905).

[2] Green, *Prolegomena*, § 211 (pp. 251 foll.).

[3] *Ibid.* p. 255.

It seeks for each a real freedom, a real emancipation from the conditions which crush, degrade and impoverish life. Speaking broadly, therefore, the method of social justice is co-operation rather than competition; it would supersede the instinct of private gain-getting by that of service. Thus the sense of social duty will naturally discourage the inordinate accumulation of wealth and the development of luxury beyond the point at which it promotes personal efficiency. It will create a Christian conscience in regard to such matters as personal expenditure and monetary investments. It will prompt the purchaser to take careful account not merely of the cheapness of goods supplied to him, but of the conditions under which they are produced or conveyed. It will restrain the investor from taking shares in any business or enterprise without due regard to its nature, its object, and the manner in which it is conducted. It will keep alive in each shareholder a feeling of responsibility for the way in which capital is administered, the conditions under which *employés* work, the amount of their earnings and all other matters which affect their physical and moral well-being.[1] Indeed, all questions of remuneration for service rendered—questions of fair wages, legitimate profits, just prices,

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[1] On the ethics of investment, see a useful paper in W. Cunningham, *The Path towards Knowledge*, pp. 57–77. Also the 'second report' (S.P.C.K.) of a joint committee of the Houses of Convocation on *The moral witness of the Church on Economic Subjects* (no. 426); with Dr. Cunningham's 'open letter' on the same subject (Camb. Univ. Press).

etc., fall under the regulative principle of social justice. Nor is this application of the principle by any means of modern date. The ideal of the Church in early centuries, in opposition to the unlimited freedom of contract sanctioned by Roman law, was that of a *justum pretium*.[1] Ambrose, in the *de officiis*, discusses the relation of the Christian law of justice to the law of nature. Nature, he says, is the author of common right: *natura omnia omnibus in commune profudit.* Private property is an inevitable declension from an ideal, but in any case the unrestricted accumulation of wealth and the selfish occupation of land by vast private estates is an outrage of justice, a breach of the law of benevolence. 'For how can he be just who strives to take from another what he seeks for himself?'[2] In the same spirit Aquinas applies the 'golden rule' (St. Matt. vii. 12) to the transactions between buyer and seller.[3] In fact, the method of Christian ethics has always been to insist on the practical identity of justice with benevolence. The love which *worketh no ill to his neighbour* will also withhold no good; its law is *to render to all their dues;* to *do good* up to the full measure of possibility.[4] There may be occasional

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[1] The phrase seems first to occur in Aug. *de Trin.* xiii. 6.

[2] *de officiis*, i. 28. Cp. Greg. Mag. *de past. cura*, p. 3, xxi.

[3] *Summa*, ii. ii^{ae}, 77. 1: 'Nullus vult sibi rem vendi carius quam valeat. Ergo nullus debet alteri vendere rem carius quam valeat.'

[4] Rom. xiii. 7–10. Bern. *serm. de diversis*, liii. 2: 'Justitia est in duobus, in innocentia et beneficentia. Innocentia iustitiam inchoat, beneficentia consummat.'

difficulty, as in every practical problem, so in determining what precise form of good is owing to our neighbour, and how far the fair distribution of good may necessitate some diminution of good on the whole.[1] This, however, is a point of casuistry which does not affect the broad principle stated by St. Paul in Rom. xiii. The Christian idea of justice is that it is a form or aspect of love which for the sake of God seeks the highest and most comprehensive good of man.

But Christian justice cannot be supposed to begin and end with the mere fulfilment of such duties as would be obligatory in an ideal state of things. There are duties which arise out of the immediate social situation, in which the distribution of good things is so anomalous and fundamentally unjust. St. Paul, in dealing with another department of social ethics, gives advice in view of *the present distress*.[2] And when we consider how disproportionate a share of the opportunities which wealth can supply falls to the lot of a few; when we take into account the actual conditions under which vast multitudes of men, women and children live and work in a modern State like our own;—we shall feel that the sense of justice cannot be satisfied either by the 'charity' that merely waits on human misery, or by punctilious fulfilment of the most obvious obligations of honesty. The duty of simplicity in the scale and type of living becomes imperative;

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[1] On the relation of justice to benevolence, see Rashdall, *op. cit.* bk. I, ch. viii. § 6.

[2] I Cor. vii. 26.

the duty of limiting personal expenditure to the lowest point consistent with the efficient discharge of social function, and of 'trying to reduce the present enormous differences between the highest and the lowest standard' of comfort.[1] There is also the duty of taking pains to realise and to supply the *real* needs of the poor: space for decent living, fresh air, opportunities of recreation, adequate education. And this implies self-denial, the exercise of thought and imagination, the diligent use of civic opportunities, the cheerful acceptance of civic burdens.

3. The duty of *service* or *labour* is a consequence of the law of stewardship. And this brings us to the Christian doctrine of property. The institution of private property may be defended chiefly on two grounds. First, it is an essential condition for the development of a country's resources, and acts as a stimulus to human effort. The creation of wealth, the supply of natural wants, the development and organisation of industry, the conquest and manipulation of nature in the interest of the *regnum hominis*, could not be carried on apart from the accumulation of property. On the other hand, property is a necessary condition of individual well-being. It is the material on which human personality exerts its energies; it is an instrument by which character is trained; it tends to develope great moral qualities. And in order that it may fulfil this high social function, there must be a certain measure of freedom in the acquisition

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[1] Rashdall, *op. cit.* bk. 1, ch. viii. § 7. Cp. Westcott, *The Incarnation a revelation of human duties*, p. 20.

and use of property. But normally, property has its origin in labour. Under the complex conditions of modern industry, wealth is (it has been truly said) 'the product of the whole society exclusive of the idlers.' It implies the co-operation of innumerable agencies, making possible manufacture, exchange and output. Accordingly, since property is in a sense created by the community, it is indefensible, except on the condition that it renders service to the community, and the holder of it is under obligation to take a proportionate part in the tasks laid upon society.[1]

Now, in relation to the claims of the community, wealth of whatever description is subject to the law of stewardship or trusteeship. All gifts and faculties are bestowed by God for the purposes of social service.[2] No man can call the things that he possesses—wealth, influence, place, endowments—absolutely his own. He is at most a usufructuary, a trustee. All that he possesses is to be used or administered in accordance with the Gospel rule:

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[1] It is, of course, on this ground that the State has the right of control and interference in regard to property. Cp. Hobhouse, *Democracy and Reaction*, ch. ix.

[2] Rom. xii. 3 foll.; cp. Greg. Mag. *de past. cura*, p. 3, xx. The mediaeval canonists regarded labour as 'the sole [human] cause of wealth, and also as the only just claim to the possession of wealth.' (In this doctrine they are in accord with modern socialists.) Other classes (*e.g.* gentry or clergy) were regarded as *debtors* to the labourer, and only deserved their higher honour or larger wealth in so far as they performed duties which involved greater labour and peril: *e.g.* the duties of government. See Ashley, *Economic History*, vol. i. p. 393.

the abundance of one a supply for another's want.[1] Conversely, no wealth is legitimately earned which is not an exchange for service rendered or work done. To acquire wealth without giving an equivalent, *e.g.* by gambling, by dishonest trading, or by reckless speculation, is really a form of robbery. Accordingly, work is the duty and privilege of every class, and society has a just claim on the service of all. The forms that such service may take are, of course, infinitely varied; but it is characteristic of the Christian spirit that it inspires a sense of the 'ultimate unity of all pursuits that contribute to the good of man.'[2] There are many ways in which the well-considered employment of capital might mitigate terrible inequalities of modern social life, and so contribute to the one great end of organised human effort. Brotherly love and consideration for others will prompt each member of the Christian community to be *not slothful in business.*[3] So again the problem of unemployment will press heavily upon Christians in proportion to their sense of the importance of work, both as a discipline of character and as a contribution to the common tasks of society. Moreover, they will insist, as opportunity occurs, upon the principle that the due remuneration of the labourer should be the first charge upon any industry;[4] that labour should be not only honoured,

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[1] 2 Cor. viii. 14.

[2] Green, *Prolegomena*, p. 173.

[3] Rom. xii. 10, 11.

[4] This is the principle of the 'living wage,' which, of course, varies with the nature and number of the claims made upon the

but protected, and that the life and health of the worker should be the primary care of the employer.

4. It is obvious that under modern conditions the duty of the property-holder tends to become merged in that of the good citizen. In ancient ethics the prominence of civic duty was for various reasons very marked. It has not always held a place of parallel importance in Christian ethics.[1] There have been reasons for this which need not be particularly considered here. It must be remembered, however, that in its endeavour to leaven the tone of society by raising the standard of individual character, early Christianity was paving the way for those modern political conditions which have opened so many avenues for Christian enterprise and self-devotion. The attitude of a Christian in a free country, enjoying representative institutions, constitutional government and a large measure

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worker. For 'nature is not contented with bare sufficiency unto the sustenance of man, but doth evermore covet a decency proportionable unto the place which man hath in the body or society of others,' (Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* vii. 24, § 18).

[1] This is, perhaps, the point of the charge brought against Christian ethics by Mr. Mill, in his *Essay on Liberty*, p. 29. He speaks of Christian morality as 'falling far below the best of the ancients, and doing what lies in it to give to human morality an essentially selfish character, by disconnecting each man's feelings of duty from the interests of his fellow-creatures, except in so far as a self-interested inducement is offered to him for consulting them,' etc. On the prominence of civic duty in ancient philosophy see Lecky, *Hist. of European Morals*, i. 201 f. On civic duty in relation to present conditions see Bishop Potter's interesting Yale Lectures, *The Citizen in his Relation to the Industrial Situation.*

of local autonomy, can no longer be one of passive submission to conditions which are capable of being abolished or modified. He is no longer merely the dutiful subject of a despotic government, but the responsible citizen of a free State; and for him indifference to the moral interests of the community as a whole is plainly impossible. He realises that the fulfilment of Christian obligations involves not only personal and private effort, but zeal for public reforms, municipal and political. Legislation has its part to play in the moral education of mankind. It embodies the judgment of the average conscience. It at least enforces a minimum standard of right conduct; hence the importance of loyally supporting the existing law so far as it is in any way apt to secure any measure of social justice. But an immense field is open for legislation which definitely aims at protecting weak and helpless classes, at restricting the tyranny of capital and correcting its indifference to the physical and moral well-being of great masses of workers. The sense of public responsibility will consequently impel the Christian citizen to take a personal share in fostering an enlightened public opinion on questions of social policy. Even sound legislation is, as experience has repeatedly shown, apt to be inoperative, because it is not supported by a well-informed public opinion. For instance, the English dislike of compulsion in any form has hindered the operation of housing Acts, of sanitary reforms, and of measures for reclaiming criminals, etc. What is needed, in some cases at least, is not fresh legislation, but the more

stringent enforcement of existing laws; and this clearly depends to a great extent on the growth of an active social conscience, and the consequent raising of the average level of opinion on social subjects.

A Christian, then, will consider legislation and State-interference, first, in its bearing on the condition of the weak, helpless and ignorant members of the community, who need the stimulus and protection of law; secondly, in its relation to the development of personality. As to every proposed reform, he will naturally ask how far it promotes the elevation of character or renders easier the fulfilment of duty; whether it extends or restricts existing opportunities of living a worthy and healthful life; whether, in fact, it is a step towards a condition of things in which 'all human beings shall be treated as actually or in promise *persons*—as agents of whom each is an end equally to himself and others.'[1]

But, finally, the effort to aid the State in its attempt to protect the weak by legislation, or to remove the causes which hinder the moral and physical well-being of any class, must make a real demand on the spirit of self-sacrifice. The great duty of the Christian citizen in this regard will be willingness to take trouble and to bear burdens. He will cheerfully defray his share of the large public expenditure which social reform necessarily involves. He will be public-spirited enough, when

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[1] Green, *Prolegomena*, p. 330. See in general Bp. Gore, *The Social Doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount;* Bp. C. Stubbs, *The Social Teaching of the Lord's Prayer.*

occasion requires, to undertake the irksome burden of municipal or political offices. In a word, he will not evade civic responsibilities, but will accept them from a sense of duty to the community, and with the aim and hope of bringing Christian principles to bear upon the social problems of his time. For the moral welfare of communities and of nations ultimately depends upon the exertions of individual men, who represent that spirit of good will by which alone the cause of true progress is advanced, and who look upon the fulfilment of civic duty as essentially a religious service.[1]

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[1] Cp. Barnett, *The Service of God*, pp. 26 foll.; Gore, in *The Church and New Century Problems*, pp. 55 foll. As to other subjects dealt with in this chapter, see on *personal expenditure*, Westcott in *Lessons from Work*, pp. 341 foll.; Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, bk. i. ch. 8, § 7. On *luxury*, Sidgwick, *Practical Ethics*, pp. 178 foll.; Bosanquet, *The Civilisation of Christendom*, no. ix.

CHAPTER XV

CHRISTIAN DUTY.—(*continued*)

'Dilectio sui ipsius includitur in dilectione Dei et proximi.' —T. AQUINAS.

'Charity, that more excellent way, is a tender affection for the whole creation of God.'—BISHOP WILSON.

IN the present chapter we are concerned with two departments of duty which remain to be considered.

Duties towards self are implicitly comprised in duty towards God and towards one's fellow-man. The difficulty has been sometimes urged that it takes two persons to make a duty. Duty is 'what I owe to another'; and consequently there can be no such thing, strictly speaking, as duty to one's self. Any such duty, as distinct from mere self-regarding prudence, must be owing to God.[1] But we are justified in falling back upon the distinction, by no means peculiar to Christianity, between two selves—the old self, or *old man*, which it is our task to put off, and the *new man*, the ideal personality destined to be realised hereafter. This nobler or 'coming' self we may rightly love, because it is

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[1] Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, i. 244.

already an object of divine solicitude.[1] We owe duties to this true image of ourselves, which 'lives in God and is hid in Christ.'[2] Accordingly, all that concerns the personal life—the care of health, the culture of mind and body, the use of recreation—has to be brought within the domain of law. For every movement of will involves a moral judgment, and every conscious act or choice falls under the regulating control of the law of love.

On the other hand, man owes duties to the non-personal sphere which environs him. Such duties are perhaps best regarded as a part of the reverence which we owe to the revealed mind and will of the Creator. We speak of the 'duties of property,' implying that 'duty' is fulfilled in so far as we make legitimate use of the instruments which serve to promote a worthy human life. So, as inheriting dominion over Nature, man is bound to regard as sacred that which comes from God, reveals God, and ministers to His purposes.[3] In his use of nature, man finds scope for exercising moral purpose, and, so far, he may be said to owe 'duties' to the creatures below him in the scale of development.

It is with these two spheres of duty that we are now concerned.

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[1] Cp. Rom. vii. 21 foll.; Eph. iv. 22. Aquinas, *Summa*, ii. ii^{ae}, 19. 6, says: 'Homo se propter Deum et in Deo diligit.'

[2] Dormer, *System of Christian Ethics*, § 56.

[3] Aquin. *Summa*, i. ii^{ae}, 1. 2: 'Tota irrationalis natura comparatur ad Deum sicut instrumentum ad agens principale.'

I

True self-love is an element, as we have seen, in our love to God. We are bound, so far as we can, to regard ourselves as God regards us; to share His purpose for us and His conception of our possibilities. Further, self-love is the standard of love to our fellow-men. The good that a man seeks for himself he ought to seek for others; and, conversely, he loves himself most rationally and effectually when he seeks the common good of his fellow-men. What, then, are the duties which he owes to himself?

1. First stands the duty of *self-preservation*—the due care of the body and of bodily health. Christianity is a life; and what the Christian aims at is a life at once rich and enriching, full of intelligent interests and serviceable to society. Accordingly, St. Paul discourages excessive bodily austerity, which is apt to waste the powers of the body without heightening moral or spiritual efficiency.[1] Of self-discipline in general we have already spoken. It is the preliminary stage in virtuous self-culture, the process by which the will attains to its due supremacy. The care of the body is included in the work of self-culture, the aim of which is to make the whole personality a fitting instrument for the service of God and of mankind. Such care implies not only self-control or temperance, but maintenance of the true mean in matters of recreation. As regards bodily vigour, the wise warning is needed

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[1] Col. ii. 23: *μὴ ἐν ἀφειδίᾳ σώματος.*

that what we should aim at is not the power of performing great or sensational feats, but the cultivation of *endurance.*[1] Bodily strength is a fundamental element in the virtue of *ὑπομονή* which holds so conspicuous a place in the New Testament conception of character.[2] But, speaking broadly, our duty is to avoid any habit, mental or bodily, that disturbs the healthful balance of our faculties or lowers vitality. If temperance is chiefly concerned with the control of the bodily appetites and passions, the virtues that regulate the less importunate impulses of nature will be sobriety and moderation—*sobriety*, which guards a man from drinking too deeply of the intoxicating draught of pleasure, from yielding to the pressure of worldly care and business, from inordinate use of the gifts and enjoyments of life; *moderation*, which 'in least things sets the limit.'[3] Moderation enjoins not only self-restraint in work and recreation, but care in regard to the *minutiae* of external apparel, furniture, and other conveniences of life. The principle implied in various passages of the New Testament[4] seems to be that a person's dress and style of living is to be proportionate to his station or function in society, or to the occupation in which he may chance to be engaged. William Law goes to the heart of the matter when he represents 'Paternus' as instructing his son on these

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[1] 2 Tim. ii. 3, etc. Cp. Dorner, *System of Christian Ethics*, § 60.

[2] *ὑπομονή* is the Christian counterpart of *καρτερία* in heathen ethics. See Trench, *Synonyms of the N. T.*, § liii.

[3] See Aquinas, *Summa*, ii. ii^{ae}, quaestt. 161–169.

[4] 1 Tim. ii. 9; Tit. ii. 3.

points: 'Let your dress be sober, clean, and modest, not to set out the beauty of your person, but to declare the sobriety of your mind; that your outward garb may resemble the inward plainness and simplicity of your heart. For it is highly reasonable that you should be one man, all of a piece, and appear outwardly such as you are inwardly.'[1]

It may be thought that to distinguish between temperance, sobriety, and moderation is needlessly subtle and systematic. It is evident that moralists, from Cicero downwards, have found difficulty in making good any such distinction. There is, however, practical convenience in following the line pursued by Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa.* He may be criticised as over-minute in his classification of the self-regarding virtues, but his treatment is full and suggestive. It may be noted in particular that he regards the virtuous control of the desire of knowledge as an integral part of Christian moderation.[2] Such well-controlled desire is *studiositas;* the excessive pursuit of knowledge is *curiositas.*[3] There is a habit of intemperance in work or study which does not allow fair play to

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[1] *A Serious Call, etc.* ch. 18. As to the dress of women, see ch. 9. (We are reminded of Polonius's advice to Laertes, in *Hamlet*, act i. sc. 3.) Ambrose, in the *de officiis*, i. 43, speaking of moderation, says comprehensively: 'Quaerendum est etiam in omni actu quid personis, temporibus conveniat, atque aetatibus, quid etiam singulorum ingeniis sit accommodum. Saepe etiam quod alterum decet, alterum non decet.'

[2] Cp. a valuable passage in Bern. *in Cant.* xxxvi. 3.

[3] Cp. Aug. *Conf.* x. 35. 54. The distinction is, perhaps, anticipated in Seneca's maxim (*Epist.* lxxxviii. § 36): 'Plus scire quam sit satis, intemperantiae genus est.'

the faculties either of body or spirit, and which is a danger that specially besets an industrial and scientific age.

The great object of a Christian should be the cultivation of vitality—of power in all its forms. Hence it is unwise and unhealthy to give too much prominence to the thought of death. For the Christian, there is a sense in which Christ has *abolished* it.[1] Henceforth it is not a calamity to be under all circumstances avoided, nor a thing to be wilfully sought. Life is to be lived faithfully and strenuously under the protecting shadow of a providence which can be trusted to release the soul from its burden at the most fitting moment. Death is a transition from one mode or stage of conscious existence to another, and it is an event hallowed by our Lord's submission to it. Accordingly, Christian ethics re-enforces the arguments against suicide urged by pagan philosophers; *e.g.* the *religious* argument of Pythagoras and Plato, that the soldier of God must not basely desert the post assigned to him by divine care and wisdom; the *civic* argument of Aristotle, that men owe a duty to the State from which they have no right to dispense themselves. But in view of the fact that the crime of suicide shows a tendency to increase with the advance of civilisation, the Christian spirit will endeavour to combat the causes of the disease, mental or moral,

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2 Tim. i. 10. The unhealthy attitude of the Stoics and others (see Bacon's Essay 'On Death') is well illustrated by Cicero's reference to Cato (*Tusc. Disp.* i. 30): 'Tota enim philosophorum vita, ut ait idem, commentatio mortis est.'

of which suicide is a symptom—the decay of religious faith, the temper of restless vanity and self-assertion, the prevalent impatience of pain or discomfort, the unsubmissive or unhopeful temper, the discontent which modern conditions of life tend to foster.[1] Speaking broadly, and without taking possible exceptions into account,[2] deliberate suicide is immoral, because it conflicts both with the Christian conception of life as a trust, a probation, a discipline; and with the revealed character of God as a Father, whose providential purpose for each of His creatures embraces every moment and detail of their existence. In this instance, at any rate, duty to self obviously forms part of duty to God.[3]

The preservation of the bodily life, then, and the virtuous care of health are Christian duties; but they are apt, especially by votaries of 'Christian science,' to be rated too highly. While it is true that bodily health or wholeness is the physical basis of a sound and vigorous moral development, the Gospel cannot ignore its own characteristic teaching as to the disciplinary function of *pain* in the spiritual universe. Care of the body must not degenerate into a cult of health which dwarfs and impoverishes life by deliberately evading its chastening and

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[1] Cp. Lecky, *Hist. of European Morals*, ii. pp. 60 foll.

[2] The later Stoics and Epicureans regarded suicide as even meritorious under certain circumstances. As to Seneca's views, see Dill, *Rom. Society from Nero to M. Aurelius*, pp. 183 and 356.

[3] The question of suicide is frankly discussed by Dr. Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, bk. i. ch. 7, § 6. Cp. Newman Smyth, *Christian Ethics*, pp. 339–346.

educative elements. That suffering elevates, refines and purifies character, that it developes spiritual insight and moral power,—these are commonplaces of religious experience. The New Testament writers, deeply impressed with that 'transvaluation of values' which the Gospel has brought about, neither disparage the body nor encourage an over-indulgent treatment of it. St. Paul speaks of severe bodily discipline as a necessary element in the conflict with temptation; St. Peter, recalling what Christ suffered for His brethren in the flesh, bids his converts *arm* themselves *with the same mind.*[1] The example of the Redeemer rebukes that excessive shrinking from discomfort and pain which is so marked a feature of our modern civilised life. And we have already noticed how prominent a place in the ethics of the Gospel is held by endurance (ὑπομονή).

2. Duty to self also includes a just self-estimate —that temper of humility which enables a man to measure fairly his own capacities, opportunities and limitations. He is bound to think of himself soberly,[2] to judge wisely of his own special endowments, with a view, as St. Paul suggests, to estimating aright his true function and place in the social organism. Humility is not mere self-depreciation; Aquinas is quite as energetic in his condemnation of *pusillanimitas* as Aristotle himself.[3] It is rather the victory of truth in the character, the acknowledgment that every personal endowment or quality is a gift of God, to be used for His service and

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[1] 1 Cor. ix. 27; 1 Pet. iv. 1.

[2] Rom. xii. 3.

[3] *Summa*, ii. ii^{ae}, qu. 133.

honour. As a personal grace, humility is the secret of moral progress and the pledge of true stability of character, since it implies the habit of unbroken dependence on the divine help and guidance. But it is also a social virtue; it is in the interests of the peace and welfare of the Christian community that St. Paul enforces the duty of humility by an appeal to Christ's own example.[1] He implies that the desire for superiority and the spirit of partisanship are fatal to Christian unity and concord. The humility which honours all men and recognises their claim to equal consideration promotes the well-being of the whole body.[2] It excludes the envy which springs from comparing self with others; it encourages the spirit of contentment; it recognises the responsibility attaching to every gift which gives a man superiority to others. Thus humility has a social aspect. As the condition of all real excellence is a just estimate of one's own capacity and of the ideal aimed at, so the mutual subjection which humility dictates is the secret of mutual serviceableness.[3] The later history of Stoicism illustrates the way in which the exaltation of self-sufficiency as the highest of virtues tends to isolate a man from his fellows, and in fact neutralises the power and even the desire to serve them.

3. Humility is a just estimate of self, and for that very reason it is compatible with a sense of

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[1] Phil. ii. 1–11.

[2] Rom. xii. 10; Eph. iv. 1–3; Phil. ii. 3.

[3] Cp. Eph. v. 21; 1 Pet. v. 5.

personal worth and dignity. The duty of *self-reverence* follows from the Christian view of personality as an object of divine care and regard :

> 'And I, too . . . God has made me,—I've a heart
> That's capable of worship, love, and loss ;
> We say the same of Shakespeare's. I'll be meek
> And learn to reverence, even this poor myself.'[1]

We have already indicated the function of temperance in the process of self-culture. Temperance in the widest sense is the negative condition of achieving the highest level of personal efficiency. But the task set before personality is to realise its noblest possibilities. Self-reverence will therefore include (*a*) a right independence of mind ; an honest use of one's own judgment, and such a reverence for conscience as will exclude either self-deceit or the desire to please men.[2] True self-respect is inconsistent with any false dependence on others, any excessive deference to their habits or opinions, any enslavement to party or undue recourse to priestly or other 'direction.' Even in the training of character and the care of the spiritual life men should 'follow such rules of life as make for strength.'[3] The ideal to be

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[1] *Aurora Leigh*, vii. 734 foll.

[2] *ἀνθρωπαρέσκεια*. Cp. Gal. i. 10 ; Eph. vi. 6 ; Col. iii. 22. Dean Church (*Bacon*, p. 3) observes that this subtle fault is one which 'is more common than it is pleasant to think, even in good people, but which if it becomes dominant in a character is ruinous to truth and power.'

[3] Abp. Temple, speaking of confession in his *Primary Charge* (1898), p. 24.

aimed at by each individual is the capacity to solve his own personal problems, to use his own judgment, to say honestly what he thinks, to follow his own deliberately chosen line of action. And the aim of all spiritual guidance should be to develope Christian self-reliance and independence of character; the habit of being true to the leading of our highest feelings and convictions; integrity in the pursuit of truth and faithfulness to the dictates of conscience.

Self-reverence also includes (*b*) a right and high ambition; the impulse to be all that we are capable of being, and to realise any good that lies within reach of our effort. The Gospel appeals to strong natures because it sets before them an heroic ideal. Christian ambition is the transfiguration of self-assertion. It means resolute and unwearied pursuit of perfection; the temper of St. Paul when he sets before himself *the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*[1] It is noteworthy that the Apostle three times uses the word φιλοτιμεῖσθαι—each time in a most significant connection.[2] The word implies that the love of power has a place in the ethics of the Gospel; but the power is sought with great ends—the very greatest—in view. Thus Christian ambition tends to become identical with pure devotion to the interests of the divine kingdom,

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[1] Phil. iii. 14. Cp. Newman Smyth, *Christian Ethics*, pp. 367 foll; Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, ii. 205 foll.; and *National Duties*, no. xviii., 'Christian Self-reverence.'

[2] 1 Thess. iv. 11; Rom. xv. 20; 2 Cor. v. 9. See more on this subject below, pp. 381 foll.

with the temper that *covets earnestly the best gifts*,[1] which looks upon all forms of personal strength as a sacred trust to be used for ideal rather than material ends, for the advancement of good causes rather than for the attainment of personal honour or reward. Thus ambition may even be regarded as a form of humility, in so far as it implies a steadfast and truthful estimate of our capacities, and at the same time a temper of continual *aspiration*, which counts all things possible and aims at nothing lower than perfection.[2]

(*c*) Purity or simplicity of heart, in the highest sense, is the crown of self-reverence. It means the habit of looking beyond the rewards and achievements of earth to God Himself. 'He only,' writes Augustine, 'has a simple, that is a pure, heart, who overlooks the praise of men and keeps Him only in view, striving only to please Him who alone

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[1] 1 Cor. xii. 31, A.V. Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* v. 77, § 13, remarks that in speaking of the ministry as a 'good work,' St. Paul appeals to ambition, 'if I may term that desire ambition, which coveteth more to testify love by painfulness in God's service than to reap any other benefit.'

[2] St. Matt. v. 48. Professor H. Sidgwick, in an essay on 'The Pursuit of Culture' (*Practical Ethics*, no. viii.), justly remarks that true culture 'aims at nothing less than human perfection, a perfect spiritual condition, involving the "harmonious expansion of all the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature," and thus necessarily including perfection of will and of the moral feelings that claim the governance of will, no less than perfection of intelligence and taste. Its dominant idea being that of a human nature perfect on all its sides, it includes and transcends religion, which on its practical side is dominated by the more limited idea of moral perfection.'

searches the conscience.'[1] The opposite of true purity is the misdirection of desire. Purity means the integrity of a will dedicated to God in perfect simplicity of purpose; not the effort to acquire by painful effort a single Christian grace, but the steady pursuit of goodness in the widest sense. The man of pure heart is he who sets God and His will ever before him,[2] who passes through all things onward and upward to God, who amid the bewildering multiplicity of earthly duties, claims and responsibilities, holds fast to a single purpose and embraces one only ideal of life. Purity, in short, imparts to personality that moral unity which enables it to act as an undivided whole. And the characteristic reward of purity is vision—the vision here of tasks to be achieved, victories to be won, and heights of character to be attained; the vision hereafter which is man's true life: *Vita hominis visio Dei.*[3]

This inward unity, integrity, or wholeness of the personality is preserved mainly through watchful care of the faculties of imagination and thought. In His exposition of the great moral principles of Christianity, our Lord lays solemn stress on this duty.[4] The control of our thoughts is best secured by forming what Kingsley calls 'the blessed habit of intensity'; in other words, by persevering

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[1] *de serm. Dom. in monte*, lib. ii. init. See above, p. 170.

[2] Aug. *de beata vita*, xviii.: 'Ille est vere castus qui Deum attendit, et ad ipsum solum se tenet.'

[3] Iren. iv. 20. 7.

St. Mark vii. 20 foll.; St. Matt. xv. 18, 19.

concentration of mind on each task or pursuit as it comes. And beyond this negative discipline of the thoughts lies the systematic culture of imagination by patient and humble study of all that is finest and most uplifting in nature, in literature, in art, in science. In days of widespread but defective education, the ethical principle needs to be reaffirmed that self-reverence implies a serious discipline of those faculties to which beauty appeals. Such discipline is an essential element in true soundness of character, as Plato long ago discerned,[1] and as St. Paul teaches in such a passage as Phil. iv. 8, which states a far-reaching principle of choice and conduct. The function of the Christian artist, on the other hand, is to train his fellow-men in reverence and insight, teaching them to find even in common sights and sounds a revelation of beauty and goodness, ministering to the grace and completeness of life.

4. Only a word is needed in regard to another element in the true love of self, namely, the duty of Christian ownership and management of property. For in its social aspect this duty has already been touched upon in another connection. But it is well to recall the fact that property is an instrument of Christian freedom, and therefore an element in Christian self-development. We have seen that personal expenditure must be controlled by the

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[1] See *Repub.* 401 B, foll. On this subject see Bosanquet, *The Civilisation of Christendom*, essay on 'Training in Enjoyment'; and J. R. Illingworth, *University and Cathedral Sermons*, no. ix., 'The Captivity of Thought.'

habitual sense of stewardship and accountability. A distinguished specialist in social phenomena has remarked that, in great cities like London, 'men come and go, and are divorced from the sense of responsibility'; and consequently, 'extravagance, which is the exception in the life of each individual, becomes the rule.'[1] The only safeguard against this irresponsible use of wealth is a sense, not merely of social duty, but of the main end and purpose of life as a whole. The question for each is, 'What is the purpose of my life? what are the social or moral claims upon it? and how will my special work and function be best promoted?' Here, again, we touch the subject of the 'living wage'; but, setting that question aside, it may be said that sobriety, as already described, includes the temperate and heedful use of wealth. It is a duty for each to consider what measure and kind of expenditure the task of self-development really demands. At the same time we may notice that beyond the limit which Christian sobriety and the 'idea of life as a whole' suggest, there is room in Christian ethics for the virtue of *magnificence.* Wealth enables its possessor to rise to ample heights of character; to render great services; to spend and be spent on a large scale for the welfare of the community.[2] There are instances in which, as Hooker says,

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[1] Charles Booth, in *Life and Labour in London.* Cp. Hobhouse, *Democracy and Reaction*, ch. iii.

[2] μεγαλοπρέπεια is defined by Aristotle in *Eth. Nic.* iv. 2: ἐν μεγέθει πρέπουσα δαπάνη. Aquinas, *Summa*, ii. ii^{ae}, 128, regards 'magnificence' as a part of fortitude (cp. ii. ii^{ae}, 134).

'great liberality, great hospitality, actions in every kind great, are looked for, and for actions which must be great, mean instruments will not serve.'[1] In such cases also the principle of moral trusteeship will find its application.

II

From self-regarding duties we pass to those which concern the non-personal realm. Nature is the sphere of man's dominion, and he uses or adapts it according to the requirements of his physical or moral life. Thus the physical order has a certain sacredness which was recognised by the Hebrew Law in those enactments which prohibited any act that tended to override or confuse distinctions marked by Nature itself.[2] Nature, in fact, presents itself to thought in two aspects. On the one hand, it is capable of being appropriated, used instrumentally and rationally controlled by man; on the other, it is a sphere in which the divine Spirit manifests Himself. It displays tokens of an omnipresent and all-directing Providence, embracing all things and processes within the range of a definite moral purpose. Thus, although man is in a true sense lord of Nature, he is also its 'minister and interpreter'; he can only subdue Nature by obeying it; he can only read its secrets by humble and patient submission to its teaching. Accordingly,

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[1] *Eccl. Pol.* vii. 24, § 18. Cp. Westcott, *The Incarnation a revelation of human duties*, p. 19.

[2] See *e.g.* Lev. xix. 19; Deut. xxii. 9 foll.

he is morally bound to treat Nature and all natural objects reverently, 'in harmony with the creative thought' of its Author.[1]

Hence arise two duties in particular—

1. Humanity to animals. All unnecessary infliction of death or pain is un-Christian. Such infliction is only justifiable for man either in self-defence or in the satisfaction of his needs.[2] It may be questioned whether the forms of 'sport' which involve the hunting and slaying of non-noxious animals will hold its ground when moral culture becomes more widely diffused, and tastes are more completely refined and humanised. Sport of this kind is not so much *immoral* as *imperfectly* moral. Its aspect will, perhaps, change in proportion as conscience becomes better educated. For the moral sense of mankind is far from being at one on this point. There are forms of sport (*e.g.* bull-fighting) which are repugnant to an English temperament; the humane instinct of a Hindu is outraged by the slaughter of the cow or ox; and if it be true that each nation is destined to contribute some element to the fulness of the Christian moral ideal, it is quite

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[1] Martensen, *Christian Ethics* (Individual) [E.T.], § 121. Cp. Huxley's maxim, 'Science seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before facts as a little child, follow humbly wherever Nature leads you, or you shall learn nothing.'

[2] The history of the growth of humane feeling for animals is traced by Lecky, *Hist. of Eur. Morals*, ii. pp. 160 foll. Plutarch seems to lay special stress upon this duty (in his tracts on the eating of flesh).

possible that prolonged contact between East and West may lead to a new tenderness for animals among Christian nations. A recent writer in *East and West* relates an interview with a Hindu fakir of superior stamp—

'He was most friendly, and we had a long talk, in the course of which he admitted all that I had to say about love, but he then proceeded to describe an Englishman out shooting—his search for game, his following it up, the glow of satisfaction that comes over him when he brings down his bird or animal. His description was inimitable; and he added, "Is this love?"'[1]

Certainly, the more intimate knowledge of the animal world which science has brought within our reach, not only strengthens the natural feeling for animal suffering, but also deepens our conviction that the well-being of animals has a certain ethical value and implies corresponding ethical duties.[2] In this connection we are led to touch upon the perplexing moral question involved in the practice of vivisection. It is easy to assert that all infliction of pain on dumb animals (except for the purposes mentioned above) is wrong, when the motive is mere pleasure in experimenting, or mere curiosity unrestrained by any serious moral intention. So far all moralists would be in agreement. But the question is not a simple one, for the plain reason

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[1] See an article in *East and West*, vol. vi. no. 23 (July, 1908), by the Rev. A. A. Blair.

[2] See Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, bk. i. ch. 7, § 7.

that it involves an inquiry into *motives*, and also considerations of *relative value*—the value of a discovery useful to humanity, compared with the amount of suffering inflicted.[1] It is impossible on such a point to lay down precise rules. Vivisection is justifiable in so far as it can be shown (*a*) that it confers great benefits on humanity; (*b*) that it is an indispensable method of scientific research; (*c*) that it is practised with a full sense of the moral responsibility involved. Most persons feel that in the last resort the medical profession itself must be left to decide the question at issue. Medical men are the only experts qualified to judge of the utility and need of experiments on living animals; and as a body they form a class conspicuous for humanity and self-sacrifice. The question may be safely left in their hands; their aim is to mitigate human suffering by studying the processes of disease, and they are the best judges in regard to the methods by which their science can and ought to be advanced.

Thus all that the moralist can plead for is a due recognition of the moral claim which the brute creation makes on human care and sympathy; while at the same time he allows that duty to dumb animals may, and sometimes does, yield to the higher and more pressing duty which is owed to suffering humanity. Beyond this point it is unadvisable to multiply precepts. The whole problem is one of many towards the satisfactory solution of which the Christian mind is gradually but surely feeling its way.

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[1] Cp. Rashdall, *l.c.*

2. Another duty may be mentioned—that of reverence, and the 'wise passiveness' which submits to the educative influence of Nature. Contempt for natural scenery or insensibility to Nature's appeal is a moral defect when it arises from the deliberate repression or indolent neglect of the sense of beauty. Christianity is at one with natural religion in its conception of Nature as the veil of a spiritual presence, appealing to the sense of beauty in man.[1] But the Incarnation has invested Nature with a greater sacredness than it possessed for pre-Christian thinkers. It has more profound significance as a revelation of God, and wilful disregard of its appeal is a wrong done, not to our own nature only, but to the divine Spirit who, in the glory of the visible universe, manifests Himself.[2] Man owes to his own personality the duty of cultivating every faculty by which he may hold communion with God. And there are many features of modern life which tend to obscure this duty or to render it difficult. The engrossing activities of life in great cities inevitably foster the spirit of materialism, the pursuit of mere comfort, the cultivation of what is fantastic, extravagant and unreal in

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[1] See this point illustrated in Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, ch. ii.

[2] On the existence among the ancients of the feeling for Nature and its development in modern times, see L. Friedländer, *Sittengeschichte Roms*. [Eng. Tr. by L. A. Magnus], vol. i. ch. vii. §§ 7, 8. He is not, however, directly concerned with the *religious* view of Nature, as to which see Mozley, *Univ. Serm.* no. vi. 'Nature,' and two lectures on 'The sacred poetry of early religions,' by Dean Church, in *Gifts of Civilisation*, pp. 349 foll.

art. On the other hand, travel has been to a great extent revolutionised by new facilities of locomotion. The modern spirit is one of activity, haste, excitement. It tends to develope intelligence without restfulness; curiosity without thoughtfulness; familiarity with Nature without reverence. The habits of which John Ruskin complained half a century ago have been accentuated by the rapid march of civilisation. The chief object of modern travellers seems to be 'first, to get as fast as possible from place to place, and secondly, at every place where they arrive to obtain the kind of accommodation and amusement to which they are accustomed in Paris, London, Brighton, or Baden.'[1] The noblest scenery in America is wantonly defaced by vulgar advertisements; the grandest sites in Switzerland are occupied by monster hotels; in increasing numbers people do not use change of scene or travel as an opportunity of breaking away from the routine of amusement to which they are accustomed; they are anxious, as it were, to minimise the element of change, and to surround themselves everywhere with the familiar appliances and conveniences of civilised life—the theatre, the casino, the club, the telephone. It is, then, not inopportune to recall the duty we owe to Nature. Poets like Wordsworth and Elizabeth Browning may well be our teachers in this matter. The self-revelation of God in Nature claims from men a patient attention, a calm receptiveness, an expectant reverence. The 'heart that watches and receives' is the heart which

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[1] *Modern Painters*, pt. v. ch. 20.

'Nature never did betray.' And if we believe that the revelation of God addresses itself to our whole personality, we are morally bound to prepare ourselves to receive that part of the divine message which reaches us through Nature, by cultivating a certain passivity and meditativeness of soul. For personality is perfected not merely by the putting forth of effort, but by patience; by yielding itself up to be acted upon not less than by acting; by admiration not less than by emulation. In other words, its highest function is worship: self-surrender to a divine influence, response to a divine self-manifestation; and, as we have already seen, he worships aright who recognises in Nature and in the human soul itself a sanctuary of God's presence; he for whom

> 'Earth's crammed with heaven,
> And every common bush afire with God.'[1]

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[1] *Aurora Leigh*, vii. 821. Cp. the fine sentence of Dante, *de monarchia*, i. 8: 'Quum totum universum nihil aliud sit quam vestigium quoddam divinae bonitatis.' See also *de imitatione Christi*, ii. 4: 'Si rectum cor tuum esset, tunc omnis creatura speculum vitae et liber sanctae doctrinae esset. Non est creatura tam parva et vilis, quae Dei bonitatem non repraesentet.'

PART IV

CHRISTIAN IDEALS IN RELATION TO THE FAMILY, THE STATE, AND THE CHURCH

CHAPTER XVI

CHRISTIAN IDEALS IN THE SOCIAL SPHERE

A. MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

'Man is made by and for fellowship. The family and not the individual is the unit of mankind. This fact is the foundation of human life to which we must look for the broad lines of its harmonious structure.'—WESTCOTT.

WE have hitherto been concerned with the Christian personality in its individual aspect. Christianity aims at the regeneration of society through the salvation of the individual; and salvation means the deliverance of human nature from the sin that represses, hinders, or destroys its capacity to fulfil its true ideal. The Gospel reveals the conditions of this redemptive act: on the one hand, a new creative act of divine power, incorporating the individual into Him who is the life-giving Head and Source of a new humanity; on the other, the requirement on man's part of a faith which appropriates the new life and by repentance responds to its moral claim.

All this is familiar enough; but the very phrase, 'Head of a new humanity,' reminds us afresh that the ideals of Christianity are social; that the

kingdom of God, which is the ultimate goal of all rightly directed human effort, implies an ideal condition of human society. The personal life, as Christianity conceives it, needs to be developed, extended and consummated in a corporate or social life. The kingdom (to use the familiar imagery of the Gospels) is not only the *pearl of great price* which rewards individual effort, but the *leaven* which secretly permeates and transfigures human society. Individual personality acts on society and contributes to its welfare and completeness; while conversely, the community enriches, moulds and developes personal character, and provides due scope for its capacity of service. Thus there necessarily emerges a Christian ideal of those social groups or communities—the family, the State, the Church—in which the individual finds his appropriate discipline and training. To a Christian view they are ends in themselves, having intrinsic worth and dignity, and fulfilling each a distinct function in the advancement of the divine kingdom.

I

Each of the moral communities just mentioned finds its basis and explanation in man's need of fellowship—in the fact that he is *φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῶον*. In different degrees they satisfy man's impulses towards self-consummation and self-completion; and of these the most elemental is that which draws one sex to find its complement in the other. Marriage, then, from the moral point of

view is the divinely ordained extension or completion of personality; and while the State naturally deals with it as a contract or transaction which needs sanction, protection and regulation, the Church views it ideally and spiritually as a state of life and a school of character. From this point of view marriage is to be regarded, first, as an *actual fusion*, and not merely the completion, of *two distinct personalities.* The physical union of man and woman is the symbol or sacrament of a spiritual communion which tends towards an ever closer oneness and affinity of soul with soul, spirit with spirit, and heart with heart. And since the end of marriage is a perfect mutual self-communication, physical and spiritual, a *consortium omnis vitae*, it follows that the true idea of marriage can only be realised when it is exclusive (monogamous) and indissoluble. The idea is contradicted in cases where there is a great disparity of intelligence or education; or where the self-surrender on either side falls short of being absolute and entire.

Secondly, marriage is a *permanent relationship*, not a mere contract terminable at will. The married are *no more twain, but one flesh.* The self-surrender on each side is final and absolute; but in the case of the woman this involves a greater venture than in that of the man. She is more deeply concerned than he in the perpetuity of the marriage-bond. Hers is pre-eminently a relationship of trust and dependence, and the fixity and security of her position serves to protect her against the consequences of lawless passion or caprice. ‘Nothing,

writes Hume, 'is more dangerous than to unite two persons so closely in all their interests and concerns, as man and wife, without rendering the union entire and total.'[1] It is a sound social instinct that draws as close as possible the marriage knot; and it is in view of the permanence of the bond that the Church dwells so insistently on the moral responsibility incurred by those who enter into this sacred relationship; that it lifts a warning voice against the impulse to enter the married state 'unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly.' Men and women too often bind themselves together in wedlock without mutual reverence or self-knowledge; prompted by such unworthy motives as a transient sympathy, a passing fancy, weariness of a single life, social ambition, or the desire of wealth. And where the relationship is impaired or hampered by fault on either side, the sense of the indissolubility of the union is a powerful factor making for reconciliation, reunion, and renewed effort to realise the ideals of married fellowship.

Once more, the Christian view of marriage regards it as a *sacred vocation* in which there are duties to be discharged, and a spiritual discipline to be accepted. Marriage fails of its purpose if it does not tend to enrich and strengthen character, or if it does not expand social sympathies. For marriage was ordained to supply that very training in forbearance, patience and moral thoughtfulness which are the essential conditions of social serviceableness. Instead of being a mere 'stronghold of

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[1] Essay xviii., *Of Polygamy and Divorces.*

individualism,' it is adapted to enlarge and educate the spirit of brotherly love—to develope—

'Loves filial, loves fraternal, neighbour loves
And civic. . . .
All reddened, sweetened from one central heart.'[1]

And in any case 'the cares of honest marriage' involve a discipline of affection and will from which men and women too often seek impatiently to extricate themselves, forgetful that this discipline, if cheerfully accepted, may be found fruitful in personal and social blessing.

Such, in its leading outlines, is the Christian conception of marriage. Christianity vindicates, on the one hand, the objective worth of the family as a fundamental institution on which the social fabric is based, and which is absolutely essential to the development and self-realisation of individual personality. On the other hand, the Gospel lays stress on the sacredness of marriage in its subjective aspect, as the spiritual union of two persons, freely giving themselves each to other, and united as *joint-heirs of the grace of life.*[2] And it is noteworthy that the honour in which the Gospel holds the institution of marriage corresponds both to its strong sense of the value of personality and also to its high estimate of the dignity of woman. It has been remarked that the Christian differs from the pre-Christian family in so far as it is founded on woman rather than on man.[3] The Gospel emphasises not

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[1] E. Browning, *Aurora Leigh.*

[2] 1 Pet. iii. 7.

[3] Lilly, *Right and Wrong*, p. 214.

only the spiritual equality of woman with man—an equality consistent with fundamental differences of physical structure and mental habit; but also the dignity of woman as the element of stability in civilisation, the fixed centre round which household life builds itself up, and the fundamental social affections develope themselves. *Every wise woman buildeth her house*, says the Old Testament sage;[1] and this function she fulfils by the exercise of an influence that is in the main silent and indirect.

When we consider more particularly the teaching of Christ on the subject of marriage, we are struck by the way in which He points back behind the imperfections and hindrances which threaten the stability and finality of the marriage-contract to the divine original of the institution. We find Him dwelling on the divine ideal—that which was *from the beginning;*[2] and it is everywhere implied in the New Testament that marriage is recreated and hallowed by the Gospel; that it is raised to the height of its possibilities only 'in Christ.' Marriage is throughout contemplated apart from sin and its consequences; in its ideal relation to the social order, or rather to the kingdom in which all men are destined to form a single family, bound together by ties of mutual service and by the common worship of one heavenly Father. Beyond two or three brief allusions to divorce, the New Testament says nothing of the practical failures of marriage, nor does it inculcate the specific duties of married and household life. It is content to lay down

[1] Prov. xiv. 1.

[2] St. Matt. xix. 4 foll.

general principles, the observance of which will tend to guard and maintain the ideals which marriage and family-life represent.

For instance, there are familiar passages in the apostolic Epistles, in which we find the different members of the typical household addressed each in turn, and enjoined to bear in mind the rightful claims of others.

The institution of the family is from the first overshadowed by the thought of God, who is the Archetype and Source of all fatherhood, the Author and Guardian of those social instincts which bind men together in families and communities.[1] The *fear of God* is to control and guide the desire for wedded life and to determine the choice of a partner.[2] It will inspire and hallow the nurture of children; it will supply a motive for their obedient subjection to their parents; it will impart a dignity to even the lowliest tasks of household service.[3] All duties are to be fulfilled *in the Lord*, and *unto Him*, in union with His mind and under the leading of His Spirit, with the sole desire to please and glorify Him.[4] Moreover, the Gospel connects the elements of social morality with transcendental mysteries of faith. The ideal family-life of earth is the counterpart of a heavenly pattern. This is the thought which inspires the treatment of the special duties appropriate to each relationship within the family circle. To the husband belongs the element of rightful *authority*, and, accordingly,

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[1] Eph. iii. 15.

[2] 1 Cor. vii. 39.

[3] Eph. vi. 1 foll.

[4] Col. iii. 18 foll.

the wife is enjoined to recognise with dutiful and affectionate submissiveness the natural leadership of the man, while looking to him for guidance and protection.[1] And authority must be conjoined with *affection*. The husband is therefore bidden to love his wife with reverent and compassionate regard, with unselfish consideration for her physical weakness, with a heart quick to discern, and eager to cherish, the ideal possibilities of her character, and an eye ever directed towards the inner meaning and ultimate goal of wedded love—that perfect oneness of flesh and spirit which is the *great mystery* of the natural life, reflecting the relation of Christ to the humanity which He has redeemed and hallowed by His sacrifice of Himself.[2]

On the children themselves is impressed the duty of *obedience*. Nothing is said to them touching the rights of personality or possible pretexts for claiming independence. On the other hand, parents are warned not to provoke their children by harsh and despotic use of their authority ; not to discourage them by undue austerity or by exacting demands.[3] Finally, servants are exhorted to show *fidelity ;* we hear nothing in this connection of 'personal rights' and 'liberties.' On the contrary, they are reminded of the dignity of all service that is rendered *as to the Lord and not to men ;* while the master is urged to keep alive in himself the sense of his responsibility towards those who are his spiritual equals in the

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[1] Eph. v. 23, 24.

[2] Eph. v. 25-33.

[3] Eph. vi. 1 foll.

sight of God.[1] In a word, all relationships in the typical household are hallowed by being lifted in the kingdom of God to a new and transcendent level. Earthly parentage is a shadow of the Fatherhood of God; sonship and servitude are consecrated and transfigured by the filial devotion of Him who took upon Him *the form of a servant;* marriage is a mystery because it is an earthly shadow and counterpart of the love with which Christ cherishes His Church. The family is 'the nearest of human analogies' to that higher order which the Gospel proclaims.[2]

II

The Christian ideal is confronted by the facts of modern civilisation: by the effects on domestic stability of modern industrial organisation, superseding to a large extent the economic function of the family; by the importance attached to personal independence; by the growth of the democratic spirit and the consequent emergence of a claim which is supposed to be incompatible with the family-forming instinct.[3] And the question arises, What is the Christian view of those modern movements or habits of thought which are modifying the old conceptions of marriage and the family?

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[1] Eph. vi. 5-9. Cp. Col. iii. 22 foll. with Bp. Moule, *Colossian Studies*, pp. 236 f.

[2] Cp. Peabody, *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 147.

[3] See J. Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics* (in 'The Citizen's Library,' pub. by the Macmillan Company).

For we cannot ignore the fact that we are at present witnessing a conflict of ideals, or even of types of civilisation. 'Marriage and the family,' we are told, 'are perennially fluctuating institutions, and probably scarcely anything in modern life has changed and is changing so much.'[1] This, at least, seems to be clear—that the practical tendency of recent changes has been in the direction of protecting and providing scope for individuality. The State has intervened freely to secure the independence of the wife; to curtail the rights of husbands and parents; to protect, educate and even feed the child; and all this in pursuance of the great principle of social justice—equality of opportunity for each individual: a principle which ultimately rests on the Christian view that each individual life has absolute worth, and must be treated accordingly as an end in itself.[2] While, therefore, it would seem that Christianity is bound to be generally in sympathy with what are called 'socialistic' rather than with 'individualistic' ideals, the function of the Church is to bear witness, as against the socialist, to the inviolable privileges and responsibilities of the individual soul; as against the individualist, to

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[1] H. G. Wells, *First and Last Things*, p. 211.

[2] Cp. Lact. *div. inst.* v. 14: 'Deus enim qui omnes homines et generat et inspirat, omnes aequos, *i.e.* pares esse voluit, eandem condicionem vivendi omnibus posuit, omnibus immortalitatem spopondit; nemo a beneficiis eius caelestibus segregatur; . . . nemo apud eum servus est, nemo dominus; si enim cunctis idem pater est, aequo iure omnes liberi sumus; nemo Deo pauper est nisi qui iustitia indiget; nemo dives nisi qui virtutibus plenus est; nemo denique egregius nisi qui bonus et innocens fuerit.'

the law of service and self-sacrifice which supersedes the pursuit of personal interest. The general principle involved in the Christian law of society is that each member, whatever be his position, is to consider, not his own claims, but those of others.[1] While human legislation is concerned for the most part with *rights*, the law of Christ is concerned with *duties;* the State regards marriage as a contract, the Gospel looks on it as a mystery of self-devotion; the State protects the rights of women, children and *employés*, the Gospel tells them how they may be conformed to the example of Christ; the State encourages self-assertion, the Church lays chief stress on love, submission and service.

We have already seen that the two ideals of self-assertion and self-sacrifice are not incompatible; both have their place in the ethical teaching of the Gospel; both are permanent elements in the development of character. The Church, however, welcomes the extension of personal rights and liberties, not as an end in itself, but as providing scope for the ampler fulfilment of the duties of Christian service. The institution of the family is guarded and cherished by the Church as an invaluable school of character: a sphere in which the individual learns those qualities of reverence for authority, consideration for the rights of others and tenderness to the weak, which are the secret of social effectiveness in the larger community of the nation.

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[1] Phil. ii. 4.

The problem of the family is thus the problem of securing and safeguarding the primal form of organic social life; the elementary school, so to speak, in which are discovered 'the principles, at least, of the right answers to many of the most urgent problems of society.'[1] The family is the earliest home of individuality; but in so far as it becomes in any sense 'the stronghold of individualism,' it ceases to be controlled by the Christian spirit. The supreme law of Christian family-life is, as we have seen, consideration of the claims and needs of others.[2]

III

In modern times the institution of marriage is threatened from two opposite quarters.

On the one hand, it is notorious that Socialism of a certain type regards the family as an insuperable obstacle to social unity and to an ideal of corporate life which demands the sacrifice of personal interests, and particularly of the property-forming instinct, to the welfare of the community. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that this is the most widely prevalent opinion among advocates of Socialism. The tendency of recent thought has been in a very different direction. Socialism is certainly not committed to lax or revolutionary theories of marriage. On the contrary, its modern

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[1] Westcott, *Social Aspects of Christianity*, p. 31.

[2] Cp. 1 Tim. v. 8.

exponents frequently insist that, in the interest of the community, the functions of bearing and rearing children must be encouraged and protected to the utmost; nor do they appear to question that the best means of securing an object so vital to the welfare of the State may well be the existence of the *home* in an improved form. The appropriate task of the State is to foster and guard the integrity of family-life by the amelioration of material conditions, by providing for the proper housing of the labouring classes, the restriction of hours of labour for women, etc. The threatened disintegration of the family is due in great measure to industrial causes. For multitudes of toilers in great cities anything like home-life in its ideal form is made practically impossible by the conditions of their life and work. They have no leisure, no privacy, no comfort, no resources beyond a bare living wage, even this being in too many cases withheld. The problem of the family is, in fact, only one aspect of the problem presented by the modern industrial city. Further, among the salaried middle classes of society, numbers are debarred from marriage, or are compelled to postpone it, in consequence of economic causes which they cannot control. Many who are married are tempted to decline or evade its proper responsibilities; nor does the economic situation offer any special encouragement to the home-forming instinct. It is with these and similar facts that Socialism is primarily concerned in its estimate of marriage. Its most thoughtful advocates deplore the irreligious and materialistic tendencies with

which it has been occasionally identified.[1] They would have the State devote its energies to the task of making the conditions of family-life healthful and normal for all classes alike. They would protect and honour motherhood; would have child-rearing assisted and even rewarded as the noblest and simplest form of social service; would carefully provide for the physical welfare and moral culture of the child; would encourage thrift in all its forms; while at the same time they would leave to the individual citizen ample scope for private benevolence, for the exercise of hospitality and for the unfettered pursuit of private interests so far as these do not conflict with the collective ownership of capital and the social organisation of industry.[2]

There are marked symptoms, then, of a reaction from those revolutionary views of marriage and the family which were probably inherited by Socialism from some of its earlier exponents, and which have been more or less seriously systematised by a few German writers. The home is to be more or less transformed, but not abolished. Family-life, it is urged, should be made a real possibility for multitudes who are practically debarred from it; and it should be so organised as to reflect the influence of a new social conscience—alive to the just claims of the community, or, in other words, to

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[1] Cp. Schäffle, *The Quintessence of Socialism* [Eng. Tr. by B. Bosanquet], p. 113; Kirkup, *A Primer of Socialism*, p. 79. Mr. H. G. Wells has dealt with this subject in a popular but forcible and suggestive style in *New Worlds for Old*.

[2] Schäffle, p. 111.

the civic and national aspects of family-life. The 'exclusiveness' with which the family is charged—its *égoïsme à plusieurs*—ought to yield to wider conceptions of social duty; and this change would virtually mean the transfiguration of the home by the gradual spread of ideas which are intrinsically Christian. As we have already seen, the rightful function of the family is to train and develope the temper of fraternity, to awaken sympathy and the spirit of service, to deepen insight into the social needs of the time, to quicken zeal for public welfare.

The disintegration, then, which threatens the family from the side of revolutionary Socialism is not so formidable as is sometimes supposed. On the other hand, the anti-social force of self-centred individualism is no merely imaginary danger. We are sufficiently familiar with the point of view which regards marriage as essentially a temporary contract, involving the interests of only two persons and therefore terminable at will. It is 'unsocialised desire' of this type which is chiefly responsible for the state of things that is causing such grave uneasiness in the United States.[1] For the Christian Church the peculiar anomaly of the situation lies in the fact that, while in carrying the Gospel to the heathen she upholds the sacred and indissoluble character of the marriage-vow, and guards it as the indispensable foundation of social and moral

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[1] Peabody, *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 129: 'The number of divorces annually granted in the United States is, it appears, increasing both at a rate unequalled in any other civilised country, and at a constantly accelerating rate.'

regeneration, the legislature in civilised States is more and more showing a tendency to yield to the pressure of subjective and individualistic opinion on the subject of marriage. Thus several moral problems have become urgent, in particular those which have been recently considered by the Lambeth Conference of 1908—the problems connected with divorce, the prohibited degrees, and the immoral evasion of the responsibilities of marriage (restriction of population).

1. As regards divorce, the question of primary importance for the Church is, how far there are causes other than *πορνεία*, yet practically equivalent to it in effect, which fundamentally subvert the moral idea of marriage and may equitably be recognised as ground of legal separation. Now, it is unquestionable that our Lord's words in St. Matt. xix. 6 foll. lend no support to any such extension of the meaning of *πορνεία*; nor, on the other hand, does He, even in the case of *πορνεία* strictly understood, encourage—it is a question whether He even permits—the remarriage of the innocent party.[1] Some sanction

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[1] In view of this uncertainty the resolution of the Lambeth Synod (1888), runs as follows: 'That, recognising the fact that there always has been a difference of opinion in the Church on the question whether our Lord meant to forbid marriage to the innocent party in a divorce for adultery, the Conference recommends that the clergy should not be instructed to refuse the Sacraments or other privileges of the Church to those who, under civil sanction, are thus married.' As illustrating the perplexity in which the subject is involved, see Augustine's remarks on his book *de adulterinis coniugiis* in *Retract.* ii. 57. He speaks of it as '*difficillima quaestio.*'

for an extension of the law of divorce is supposed to be found in St. Paul's statement that where a believing husband or wife has been abandoned by a heathen partner, he or she is *not under bondage in such cases.*[1] But any definite inference from this passage is admittedly quite precarious. The question at issue is not so much whether the State is free to determine other grounds of divorce than the one mentioned in the Gospels, as whether the Church can relax her own law; and to this the answer is and must be *negative.* The Church is bound by every obligation to uphold the New Testament ideal, and cannot regard those who avail themselves of civil and legal facilities for divorce as fitting recipients of her benediction. It may be granted that the possibility of separation *a mensa et thoro* must in certain cases be recognised by the Church, and such separation must be accepted by the innocent party as a divinely sent discipline. Such causes as persistent cruelty and ill usage, deliberate desertion, insanity or habitual intemperance, may so utterly destroy the spiritual unity of the married pair and so patently contradict the Christian ideal of wedlock, that separation may become desirable and even imperative. But such causes do not amount to a justification of divorce *a vinculo;* still less do they, in the eye of the Church, warrant the re-marriage of the innocent party.[2] In effect, therefore, the

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[1] 1 Cor. vii. 15.

[2] Aug. *de bono coniug.* vii.: 'Quem non faciat intentum quid sibi velit tanta firmitas vinculi coniugalis? Quod nequaquam

Christian Church holds to the principle that, though an unhappy marriage may sometimes involve a permanent burden of suffering for individual men and women, it is in the long run better that they should suffer than that the foundations of social order should be disturbed. The severity of Christ's teaching on this subject is doubtless unwelcome to human nature, but present experience is perhaps teaching us that no less stringent law can adequately safeguard the true interests of human society. Even in America, where the grounds on which divorce is permitted are so numerous and sometimes so frivolous, there are signs of a reaction in favour of return to a stricter law.

If, indeed, it could be once generally acknowledged that the allowance of divorce does not necessarily involve the sanction of re-marriage, a step towards the recovery of Christian ideals would have been gained. It is noteworthy that some ethical writers, who are inclined to approve a certain relaxation of the Christian law of divorce, are found to deprecate re-marriage. They rightly contend that the failures of marriage are as a rule

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puto tantum valere potuisse, nisi alicuius rei maioris ex hac infirmitate hominum quoddam sacramentum adhiberetur, quod deserentibus hominibus atque id dissolvere cupientibus, inconcussum illis maneret ad poenam. *Siquidem interveniente divortio non aboletur illa confoederatio nuptialis ; ita ut sibi coniuges sint etiam separati :* cum illis autem adulterium committant quibus fuerint etiam post suum repudium, vel illa viro vel ille mulieri. Nec tamen nisi in civitate Dei nostri, in monte sancto eius, talis est causa cum uxore. Caeterum aliter se habere iura gentilium quis ignorat?'

due to human wilfulness and sin; and that the danger of lax legislation on divorce is that it encourages men and women to enter lightly upon the married state without any idea of self-discipline or self-denial. Such legislation, indeed, fosters the very temper which marriage was divinely intended to chasten and educate. As Professor Dorner observes, he who has made one mistake should learn to distrust himself; he should be inclined 'not only to fear committing fresh blunders, but also to doubt his own fitness and vocation for married life.'[1]

But the question is raised whether separation without liberty to re-marry is not the occasion of very serious evils. There are probably many thousands of persons in England who are living in a state of legal separation; and it is urged by those best qualified to pronounce an opinion that in many of these cases separation leads inevitably to vice. A multitude of men and women, many of them young, are debarred from re-marriage; and it is alleged that a large proportion of them fall into immorality. This state of things cannot with fidelity to her mission be ignored by the Christian Church, yet the moral situation is one which does not seem hitherto to have been adequately considered in the light of definite Christian principles. A further relaxation of the marriage-laws is strenuously advocated mainly on the ground of *social expediency*, as involving the least of two evils. And the very demand constitutes a challenge to the Church which

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[1] Dorner, *System of Christian Ethics*, § 72 [E.T., p. 545 note]. Cp. Martensen, *Christian Ethics (Social)*, § 21 [E.T., p. 46].

must be met. The evils, which (as some persons contend) can only be cured by an extension of the facilities for divorce, unquestionably imply a failure on the part of the Church either to discipline character or to inculcate the Christian ideal of marriage. The questions at issue manifestly require careful thought and investigation, but it must suffice here to have simply directed attention to them.

2. The question of prohibited degrees does not seem to require prolonged discussion. According to the traditional view of the whole Christian Church, *affinity* (created by marriage) follows the same rules as *consanguinity* (blood-relationship);[1] and it is on this principle that the table of prohibited degrees is based. But it is forcibly argued that the exact area of prohibition has in fact been limited by positive Church enactment rather than by divine and immutable law, (otherwise, the dispensations freely granted in the Roman Church would be indefensible), and that, in fact, while marriages within the prohibited degrees may be legalised by the State (as in the case of the wife's sister), they are at most, from the ecclesiastical standpoint, irregular and uncanonical. Consequently, those who have contracted such a union are amenable to ecclesiastical censure;[2] but the marriage is, in all essential

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[1] Aquin. *Summa*, iii. suppl. 55, 1 concl.: 'Sicut ex naturali generatione efficitur consanguinitas, ita ex matrimonio contrahitur affinitas inter viri et uxoris consanguineos.' 2 concl.: 'Ex morte viri vel uxoris non tollitur affinitas.'

[2] Mr. Darwell Stone, in a recent paper on *The Law of Christian Marriage*, points out two facts: (1) The 61st Canon of the Council of Elvira (305) directs that a man who has contracted

respects, *valid*, and separation of the parties cannot justifiably be insisted upon as a condition of communion. This view of the case has been authoritatively sanctioned by leading bishops of our own Church; but it may be questioned how far Christian ethics is required to pronounce judgment upon it. While we feel bound to uphold Christ's ideal of marriage in its integrity, bearing in mind His insistence on the principle that the man and his wife are *no more twain, but one flesh*, in regard to the question of dealing with those who have married within the prohibited degrees we shall feel that a 'rigorist' view is discredited partly by the fact that Christians have differed widely as to the inferences to be drawn from our Lord's words, partly also by the practice of the Roman Communion, which has freely and frequently relaxed her own rule by dispensation. We have also been opportunely reminded 'how dim and broken is the force of that Christian witness which, if consistent and clear, might claim with simple peremptoriness to guide Christians.'[1] The problem is not one which admits of off-hand or easy settlement. Not only must particular cases and circumstances be taken into careful account, but it must be remembered that men's consciences are in different

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such a union is to be excluded from communion for five years. (2) St. Basil directs that re-admission to communion (after *seven* years' exclusion) shall be granted in the case of 'penitence with tears.' The question is whether 'penitence' includes separation of the parties so married.

[1] See the wise and temperate counsels given by the Bishop of Southwark, in a recent Charge, *The Church's Stress*, pp. 21–27 (Macmillan, 1907).

stages of moral education, and that the Christian ideal of marriage is far from having won its way to general recognition. A man may, in perfectly good faith, regard the question of marriage within the prohibited degrees as simply one of social expediency, and the law of the Church may appeal to him only as an ideal, a 'counsel of perfection,' which lays no unconditional claim on the conscience. And in such a case it may be asked whether we are justified in penalising one whose conscience is merely 'ill-informed'?

The question in such a case is not one of wilful and deliberate breach of the Church's law, but of honest inability to understand the authority and the force of its claim. Such a case will always deserve special consideration: and the best way of dealing with it will be to argue on the accepted ground of social expediency; to show that the rule of the Church stands in close relation to the real moral interests of society; that in guarding family life by restriction of the area of marriage, it is really contributing to the stability of the social order, and resisting a tendency which is, in its essential character and consequences, individualistic and materialistic.[1] The Christian Church is, in this matter, the guardian of principles which lie at the root of social well-being. 'However much we may wish to please everybody,' says Bishop Creighton, 'we cannot rid ourselves of our duty as trustees of society. To

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[1] A good example of the line of argument here suggested will be found in Bp. Creighton's book, *The Church and the Nation*, pp. 141–149.

expand and adjust its framework is one thing; to weaken its framework is another. . . . We assert that progress is only possible if men are taught to submit their individual wishes to the common good, and to find satisfaction in curbing their desire for immediate gratification of their impulses.'[1] But in view of wide diversities of temperament, of training, of knowledge and of moral insight, we shall feel that the methods of dealing with cases of disobedience to the Church's rule must be equitably varied to suit different cases and conditions. To be rigid, peremptory and narrow in the administration of the Church's discipline is to do violence to her essential spirit and principles.

3. With regard to the restriction of births, it is scarcely necessary to say that Christian ethics condemns most emphatically the selfish and anti-social avoidance or restriction of child-bearing. The practice prevails, it is said, most extensively among those who cannot plead the excuse of poverty. But there is, unhappily, reason to think that it has become prevalent also among the middle and the labouring classes, even in the villages and country towns.

Various causes are suggested to account for this state of things. Some, no doubt, merely desire to avoid burdens and obligations which interfere with the pursuit of pleasure or with the gratification of social ambition. In many cases people are tempted to restrict childbirth by the inordinate fear of poverty, by dread of physical pain, or by the desire to exempt

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[1] *The Church and the Nation*, p. 147 foll.

children from the hardships incidental to the modern struggle for existence. But it is impossible to ignore the fact that the widespread use of restrictive methods is chiefly connected with the waning of faith, with the temper of materialism which aims at securing a maximum of earthly comfort or wealth and is destitute of religious fear and trust. While medical science may appropriately insist upon the disastrous physical effects of evading the responsibilities of parentage, the office of the Church is to rekindle in men a living faith in the providential care of God, and a sacred dread either of profaning His appointed ordinance for mankind or of defying natural laws which cannot be infringed with impunity.

It must, however, be admitted that the subject is one of real complexity, and that it ought to be candidly considered by experts in the light of actual social conditions and of the different ends for which marriage was ordained. There are problems connected with it which call for a discriminating judgment, and which cannot be dismissed by peremptory and unqualified statements. The topic must not be further pursued here, but speaking broadly and without reference to particular cases of difficulty, the Christian Church will most effectively promote the cause of morality (1) by using her influence to improve those conditions, economic and social, which tend to discourage the family-forming instinct, or which make the normal duties of married life insuperably difficult for multitudes of poor and middle-class people; (2) by inculcating the happiness and dignity of motherhood, and assisting all

efforts to encourage the rearing of children; (3) by denouncing plainly a point of view and habit of mind which is simply selfish and individualistic, or, in a word, anti-social;[1] (4) by proclaiming the ultimate unity of moral and natural law.

The subject which has engaged our attention in this chapter is many-sided. We have been chiefly concerned with those points of personal duty which arise in connection with the Christian conception of marriage and the family; but we cannot ignore the grave economic and industrial causes which are tending to modify or dissolve traditional ideas. The changed conditions of present-day life involve a certain expansion or special application of ethical principles; it will also demand a new social activity. There are matters which bear directly upon the stability and well-being of the family—for instance, the employment of women and children, the system of home industries, the *status* and obligations of domestic servants, the liabilities of householders, etc.; and personal efforts to realise the Christian ideal must accordingly be supplemented by public reforms in which the householder or father of a family will have to bear his part as a voter or citizen. The problems of the smaller are closely related to those of the greater social group. For the family exhibits in a limited sphere the action of

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[1] On this subject see the Report of the Lambeth Conference of 1908 (S.P.C.K.), pp. 144 foll. See also some remarks in Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, i. 201.

those very principles on which the political order is based — dependence and trust, authority and obedience, service and obligation. In the family a man learns his first lessons of loyalty and brotherly love; it provides an appropriate training for that spirit of mutual service and that sense of corporate responsibility which are the condition of civic and national greatness and prosperity. And since it is to those deeply rooted and simple instincts which first manifest themselves in home-life that the Gospel makes its primary appeal, we see how vitally even the extension and welfare of the Church depends upon the stability of the Christian home.[1]

[1] Cp. Martensen, *Christian Ethics* (*Social*), E.T., p. 5; Westcott, *Social Aspects of Christianity*, p. 21.

CHAPTER XVII

CHRISTIAN IDEALS IN THE SOCIAL SPHERE.
(*continued*)

B. The Church and the State

'There is a divergence of function between Church and State: one is the inspirer, the other the executor, of man's endeavours for the improvement of common life.'—M. Creighton.

From two points of view Christianity upholds the claim of the State to possess independent moral worth and sacredness.

I

In the first place, it is characteristic of the Gospel that it consecrates the whole 'natural order.' The Incarnation makes all things new. All things human, and therefore those social instincts which lead irresistibly towards the formation of the State, it hallows and endues with spiritual significance. Though in its actual constitution the State is an *ordinance of man*, it yet has a function to fulfil in the providential order; it is concerned, not with material interests, but with human life as a whole—life which has a spiritual basis and an ideal end. The Church, therefore, idealises the State, and

regards it even in its primary aspect as an organ of the divine justice, entrusted with the exercise of retributive power. The ruler is a *minister of God* to man *for good;* the reverence and submission which he claims as his due are rendered not to a human person, but to an ordinance of God.[1]

This, then, is one obvious aspect of the State. As an embodiment of public right, in other words, of a common sense of justice, it has a rightful authority over the individual and makes a moral appeal to conscience. On the other hand, the State is consecrated by the mere fact that it is charged with the protection of personality, which in Christian eyes is of absolute value and dignity. Its special function is not only to protect individual rights, but to create and maintain such conditions of life as are essential for the unfettered development of personality. In its own interest the State is bound to foster the growth of character and individuality, and so to promote the general advance of culture and social well-being. And this view of the State has been re-enforced by the teachings of experience. The evils which have flowed from unrestricted individualism have compelled us to take a more comprehensive view of the functions of government. We are justified in looking to the State to protect and rescue those who in the competitive struggle of the modern industrial system find themselves at a hopeless disadvantage. The State alone can ultimately ensure to each of its citizens that equality of

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[1] Rom. xiii. 1 foll.

opportunity which an unrestricted individualism tends to neutralise—equality of opportunity for each to become what he is capable of being, and to fulfil the function for which he is best fitted. Whether the State has hitherto in any marked degree realised and discharged this duty, is not a point to be here discussed; we are concerned with ideals, and there can be no question that the ideal function of the State, as Christianity conceives it, is to vindicate the worth of the individual life; not merely to protect life and property, still less to promote individualism,[1] but to secure for each and all that fundamental basis of material well-being on which alone life, in its true sense, can be built up,—to promote, in short, to the largest possible extent, the social efficiency of all its members. If the State, like the family, has its origin in the fact of man's personal incompleteness, it is bound to ensure that no class is unfairly handicapped, or is hindered by the sheer pressure of economic conditions from contributing its own special *quota* to the general welfare of the community. And the notion that

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[1] The 'individualistic' principles which have been discredited by the social experience of the last fifty years, are thus described by Mr. Sidney Webb, in a recent *Fabian Socialist Tract:* 'That the best government is that which governs least; that the utmost possible scope should be allowed to untrammelled individual enterprise; that open competition and complete freedom from legal restrictions furnish the best guarantees of a healthy industrial community; that the desired end of "equality of opportunity" can be ultimately reached by allowing to each person the complete ownership of any riches he may become possessed of; and that the best possible social state will result from each individual pursuing his own interest in the way he thinks best.'

government is a mere system of machinery humanly invented and maintained to protect individual 'rights,' in the narrower sense, may be dismissed as a prejudice of the 'old' Political Economy, not altogether unserviceable in its day, but characteristic of a period when the meaning and real claims of personality were quite inadequately understood. The State, in fact, has begun to realise that its duty is to protect the inalienable right of each individual to attain to the perfection, and to fulfil the social function, of which he is capable.[1]

In this account of the State we may claim that we are describing its true idea; for there can be no question as to the actual direction in which its action has tended to develope, at least in civilised countries. It finds itself, in obedience to the pressure of a strong and steady public opinion, busy with the task of providing those conditions which are most favourable to real 'equality of opportunity.' But its task is not merely social or economic. In virtue of its inclusive scope and universal power of control, the State is forced to set in motion and regulate agencies which necessarily influence character. It cannot, of course, by mere legislation, make men moral, but it can, and frequently does, so interfere with existing conditions and social arrangements as to make a

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[1] Cp. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (see *Select Works* [Oxford, 1883], vol. 2, p. 115): 'He who gave our nature to be perfected by our virtue, willed also the necessary means of its perfection. He willed, therefore, the State; He willed its connection with the source and original archetype of all perfection.' The same general idea is developed in Dante's *de monarchia*.

moral life easier for its citizens. It can and does, in its own interest, make an effort to control the mischievous forces which hinder or disturb social well-being; it can curb the lawlessness of individual greed or self-seeking; it can encourage thrift and reward self-restraint; it can guard the institutions which are most vital to national prosperity; it can uphold the dignity of marriage, superintend the nurture and education of children, protect the legitimate rights of property. In all these departments of activity the State undoubtedly moulds the habits and forms the character of its citizens. Nevertheless, it remains true, on the whole, that the State rather makes virtue possible than directly promotes it. Its scope is confined to securing for each liberty to make the best of his life. Hence it is only in a qualified sense that the art of government can claim to be a branch of ethics. The State is indeed a mighty force for good or evil, partly because it alone has compulsive power, partly because it can work by legislation on a large scale towards the removal of insuperable obstacles to a moral life. But it obviously cannot touch that region of motive and principle which is the peculiar province of ethics.

II

We have considered the ideal functions of the State; but the actual or potential range of its influence will manifestly depend upon the extent to which an enlightened sense of moral obligation prevails

in the community at large. The intervention of the State in matters industrial or economic—the regulation of labour, for instance, the restriction of working hours, the systematic inspection of factories, —all this is in reality the fulfilment of obligations which properly belong, in the first instance, to employers, owners, or shareholders, and ultimately to the community at large. 'The State,' it has been well said, 'comes to the aid of the employer's conscience, and draws upon him for the resources by which it can fulfil on his behalf those obligations which he, if he had a conscience and a heart, would instinctively have met.'[1] In other words, the State fulfils the demands of a social conscience which, as a rule, makes its voice heard through some earnest and energetic leader of opinion, or through some association organised *ad hoc.* The demand of an awakened public conscience corresponds, in fact, to our modern sense of the value of personality. The unrestricted 'rights' of private property are challenged or invaded by the State, not always because the misuse of those rights involves injury to the community, but more commonly because the public conscience is made uneasy by a condition of things which involves an inequitable and one-sided distribution of the products of industry. Thus it has come about that Government has used its power to tax the profits of capital, to restrict monopolies, to municipalise or nationalise certain indispensable industries. It has undertaken the supervision of

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[1] H. S. Holland in *The Church and New Century Problems*, p. 45.

unhealthy trades, has protected in different ways the physical and moral interests of work-people, has improved, aided and co-ordinated education. Such action on the part of the State is ultimately the outcome, not of particular economic theories, but of ethical ideas which have touched popular feeling and imagination—ideas which, as Christians claim, have their spiritual basis in the teachings of the Gospel.

It is then sufficiently plain that the Church can never be simply indifferent to the action of the State, since each step forward in social reform means not only the raising of the average standard of morality, but also the enlargement of moral possibilities for whole classes of people. The Church recognises that while religion is always the supreme agent in the regeneration of individual character, it greatly depends for its effect on all influences of another kind that may be brought to bear ; and of these influences the most easily intelligible to the mass of men, the most potent in its effect, is the action of the State. At the same time, if the influence of the State is to be effective as a moralising force, it is essential that those who are actually engaged in the working of the machinery of government should be inspired and controlled by strong moral convictions and principles. Public justice, for instance, can only be secured in proportion as its representatives have the fixed intention and will to do right. No functions of administration or judicature, no official duties, can be faithfully or successfully carried on

without high gifts of character—self-denial, self-control, industry, integrity, zeal for the public good. In a word, without some worthy or ideal conception both of the true end of man and of the office of the State, government in any true sense is impossible. The verse in the *Te Deum*, 'Govern them, and lift them up for ever,' has been well called the appropriate motto of the ideal State. Not merely to keep men in order and to enforce mutual respect for personal rights, but to 'lift them up,' is the real duty of the ruler; and this implies the dependence of the State on resources which, left to itself, it cannot command. It needs, in short, for the adequate fulfilment of its functions, the aid of religion. The great and philosophic statesman who regards the State as 'the necessary means' by which human nature is to be perfected, declares in the same context that 'whenever man is put over men, as the better nature ought ever to preside, in that case more particularly, he should as nearly as possible be approximated to his perfection;' and, he says, it is with this object in view that religion has ever been invoked to consecrate 'the commonwealth and all that officiate in it.'[1]

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[1] Burke, *Reflections*, *etc.* pp. 108, 109: 'This consecration is made, that all who administer the government of men, in which they stand in the person of God Himself, should have high and worthy notions of their function and destination; that their hope should be full of immortality; that they should not look to the paltry pelf of the moment, nor to the temporary and transient praise of the vulgar, but to a solid, permanent existence, in the permanent part of their nature, and to a permanent fame and glory, in the example they leave as a rich inheritance to the world.

III

The function of the Church in relation to the State thus becomes tolerably clear. Christianity introduces into the conception of the State what has been ingeniously called a 'metapolitical' element[1]—that is, a particular and characteristic view of man's nature and destiny, and of the chief aim that should guide the advance of civilisation. The work of the Church is to keep all men, in every class and in every sphere of life, faithful in the fulfilment of their social duty; to educate them for the tasks of civic and national life. The striking sentences in which Augustine apostrophises the Church are ideally true: *Tu cives civibus, gentes gentibus . . . non societate tantum sed quadam etiam fraternitate coniungis. Doces reges prospicere populis, mones populos se subdere regibus.*[2] And we may claim that his famous challenge is, on the whole, justified by experience: 'Let those who think that the doctrine of Jesus Christ is contrary to the welfare of the State produce such soldiers and officers as that doctrine has enjoined them to be; let them give us such administrators, husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants, kings, judges; men so punctual in their payment of public dues, so honest in exacting them, as Christian doctrine

Such sublime principles ought to be infused into persons of exalted situations, and religious establishments provided, that may continually revive and enforce them.'

[1] Martensen, *Christian Ethics* (*Social*), § 45 [E.T., p. 100].

[2] *de mor. eccl.* lxiii.

enjoins them to be. Then let them venture to assert that Christianity is injurious to the republic; or, rather, let them no longer hesitate to acknowledge that this doctrine, if duly observed, is the great safeguard of the State.'[1]

Religion, in fact, consciously aims at that moral regeneration of the individual on which the well-being of the State depends, but to which it can only contribute very imperfectly and indirectly. It is a mere dream of sentimental socialism which hopes for regeneration from *without*, 'from material conditions,' 'from generations of satisfied animal desires.' The State can at best secure a *minimum* of morality, and that by the ultimate appeal to force. The Church alone can directly promote the stability and prosperity of the State by bringing to bear on individuals a dynamic influence, which can be truly called regenerative.

In this connection we may note three characteristics of the Church's action.

1. First, it is plain that the Church, besides upholding a *maximum* or ideal standard while the State enforces a *minimum*, appeals to a motive which the State cannot supply. It brings all social obligations, all duty to superiors or inferiors, under the comprehensive law of love. The New Testament, as we

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[1] *ep. ad Marcellinum*, cxxxviii. 15. Cp. Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* v. 76, § 1: 'The very worldly peace and prosperity, the secular happiness, the temporal and natural good estate both of all men and of all dominions, hangeth chiefly upon religion, and doth evermore give plain testimony that, as well in this as in other considerations, the priest is a pillar of that commonwealth wherein he faithfully serveth God.'

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have seen, idealises even the functions of government. Duty to the powers that be forms part of the obligation involved in brotherly love. So Tertullian, in reply to the hackneyed charge of disloyalty, defends the Christian attitude to authority as follows: 'We behave towards Emperors exactly as we do towards our neighbour. To wish or to do, to speak or to think evil is equally forbidden to us in any case. What is not lawful in regard to an Emperor is in no instance lawful; the less, perhaps, in his case, seeing that God has bestowed on him so great a dignity.'[1] Christianity strengthens and simplifies the motives which make men good citizens, zealous and faithful public servants, prudent administrators of property, unselfish and considerate owners, masters, or employers of labour. And the characteristic Christian idea of a kingdom of God, the consciousness of a spiritual background lying behind human life and of a mutual connection subsisting between all forms of human activity, is a direct incentive to good citizenship. 'The Lord's prayer for the coming of the kingdom requires of Christian men active interest in all spheres of life, and along all possible lines of effort in and by which that large and perfect human good which is the kingdom of God on earth, may be advanced. The Spirit of God forbids moral indifference to anything human.'[2]

2. Again, the Church of God is, in a peculiar degree, constrained by the terms of Christ's commission, and by the force of His example, to range

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[1] *Apol.* 36.

[2] Newman Smyth, *Christian Ethics*, p. 418.

itself on the side of the weak and helpless. Its Gospel is preached pre-eminently to the poor. Its most pressing admonitions are—or, at least, should be—addressed to the privileged, the governing, the wealthy and influential classes. This is forcibly pointed out in the passage of Burke already referred to. He dwells on the exceptional need of 'religious instruction' in the case of the governing class, in view of the dangers and temptations, 'the fat stupidity and gross ignorance concerning what imports men most to know' that specially besets them. 'All persons,' he adds, 'possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust, and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust to the one great Master, Author, and Founder of society.'[1] This is precisely the Christian doctrine of trusteeship and accountability which has been noticed in another connection.[2] The persistent aim of 'Christian socialism' is to enforce the duties and responsibilities attached to any position of privilege, any form of wealth; it endeavours to bring Christian principles of justice, self-sacrifice and brotherly love to bear upon those actual conditions of modern life which, from the nature of the case, press most heavily upon the poor; it rebukes the spirit of individualism which ignores social claims—the greed of gain, the unscrupulous assertion of privilege, the callous selfishness which uses the toil, and even the degradation, of others to minister to personal enjoyment and comfort. Thus the Church naturally

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[1] *Reflections*, p. 109.

[2] See p. 271.

finds itself in line with the Hebrew prophets as the champion, and not merely the consoler, of the oppressed. It necessarily favours those forms of social order, those legislative enactments, which make for real equality of opportunity, which tend to distribute as widely as possible social benefits and the products of industry. Wherever it is true to its mission, the Church will be deeply concerned to secure for the toiling and 'unprivileged' classes reasonable opportunities of family life, sufficient leisure, decent housing, adequate remuneration. It will be keenly alive to the moral dangers involved in the mechanical toil, the precarious employment, the insufficient wage, which fall to the lot of such multitudes in the industrial state as at present organised.[1]

It must be frankly admitted, of course, that the Church has seldom realised this side of its duty, and has at times fallen grievously short of it. But one thing it has always done: it has nominally, at least, claimed the cause of the poor as peculiarly its own. It has conceived that an essential part of its mission is the task of vindicating liberty and redressing wrong. And in so far as the State has deliberately attempted to safeguard the interests of the poor and defenceless, it has been doing the work with which the Church is specially charged, and giving effect to its most characteristic principles. There can be no question that, from the very first, the Church has been committed to a certain social policy: it has

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[1] See Bishop C. Stubbs, *The Social Teaching of the Lord's Prayer*, serm. iii.

accordingly discouraged the excessive accumulation of private wealth, it has upheld the dignity of labour and commended voluntary poverty; it has been the emancipator and defender of oppressed classes and persons; it has, in brief, encouraged all those tendencies which have, as a matter of historical fact, given an impetus to social reform. We recall the communistic experiment of the first Christians at Jerusalem, the consistent teaching and practice of early bishops and Fathers, the organised community-life of early monasticism, the rise and expansion of the mendicant orders, the ideals of men like More, Campanella and Francis Bacon, to say nothing of the various 'socialistic' movements which preceded or followed the Reformation,—all preparing the way (as some would maintain) for a social and economic revolution; all, at the least, proving that the problem of poverty has ever been near to the heart of the Christian Church, and that indifference to the condition and needs of the poor, mere acquiescence in the *status quo*, has been the result of a virtual denial or forgetfulness on the part of Churchmen of their plainest obligations.[1]

3. Once more, the Church is bound to be a persistent witness to the mind of Christ. It proclaims His living example; it reiterates from age to age those judgments on human things and institutions which are implied in His words of grace and in His deeds of mercy. If, as has been said,

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[1] In this connection see in the Note at the close of the chapter, a striking passage from Professor J. B. Mayor's Commentary on *The Epistle of St. James.*

the text, *My kingdom is not of this world*, is like an eye fixed upon the Church from which it cannot escape,[1] so there are significant sayings recorded in the Gospel which are like an eye fixed upon the State. Pride and covetousness, self-sufficiency and social exclusiveness, indolence and the supine enjoyment of privilege or place,—all these things, which are so largely responsible for modern social disorders, find their condemnation in the words and acts of our Lord. At the same time, the Christian Church is not committed to any particular form of government, nor to any detailed economic programme. Its task is to spiritualise secular life by educating moral opinion in every class. Its chief concern is that the rule of justice and brotherly love should have free course in the social order, that the moral interests of individuals should be protected, and that the primary ethical ideas of the Gospel should exert their legitimate influence upon the action of the State. The 'Christian State' will become a fact in proportion as individuals and classes yield to the educational influence of the Church; in proportion as the work of legislation and administration is inspired by Christian ideas of man's nature and destiny.

IV

Christian Ethics also takes cognisance of the duty which the State owes to the Church. Hooker seems to contemplate an ideal relationship between

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[1] J. B. Mozley, *University Sermons*, p. 1.

the two when he contends that 'as by all men the kingdom of God is first to be sought for, so in all commonwealths things spiritual ought above temporal to be provided for.'[1] But at any rate the duty of the State extends beyond mere non-interference with the profession and practice of religion. The State cannot be wholly indifferent to that which so vitally affects moral practice and ideals, the performance of personal and social duty. In its own interest it is bound to encourage and protect the Church in the due fulfilment of its peculiar functions. For whatever impairs the efficiency of the Church, regarded as the great teacher and upholder of morality, as the supreme agent in the discipline of character and the correction of vice, so far menaces the prosperity of the State. A considerable portion of the Church's work consists in the battle with ignorance and crime, and with that general apathy which so manifestly fosters social evils.[2] It is from this point of view that the Church gives most effectual, though often unacknowledged, aid to the State; and we should only be able to measure the extent of her silent and all-pervasive influence if it were entirely withdrawn.

But these considerations lead us naturally to survey the relations of the Church and the State as they actually present themselves to our view in our own age and country.

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[1] *Eccl. Pol.* viii. 1, § 4.

[2] E. Belfort Bax says that in the modern constitutional State, with its glaring social anomalies, 'it is not the *will*, but the *apathy* of the majority that is represented' (*Ethics of Socialism*, p. 120).

Thoughtful advocates of what is called 'disestablishment,' who honestly desire the purification and elevation of religion in general, base their strongest argument upon the anomalous conditions of modern political life. It is generally admitted that the State serves its own true interest in keeping the Church active and efficient; and it is undoubtedly true that in days when the sovereign power resided in a *person*, and not merely in a 'government' or parliament—in a *person* having faith, conscience and religion, freely embracing the ideals of the Church and heartily sympathising with its aim and spirit—a close connection between Church and State was calculated to promote in the highest degree the interests of morality and religion.[1] For the power presupposed in the idea of the 'royal supremacy' was a *visitatorial* power,—an authority vested in the monarch to watch over the Church as a corporate body, and to enforce the observance by the Church of its own spiritual laws. Such is the state of things implied, for instance, in the Code of Justinian and in the Carlovingian legislation. In these instances, we find the civil power exercising large and loosely defined powers of control and interference without exciting any protest on the part of the Church. It was evidently not regarded as a grievance or profanation that the State should authoritatively exercise supervision over the Church—at least in

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[1] 'Imperator [bonus] intra ecclesiam, non supra ecclesiam est. Bonus enim imperator quaerit auxilium ecclesiae, non refutat' (Ambrose, *orat. in Auxentium*, *s. fin.*).

the sense of taking care that it fulfilled its appointed functions. The supremacy thus understood was accepted as absolutely natural and right at a period when the Church was virtually coextensive with the nation, or (as Professor Freeman says) actually '*was* the nation in one of its aspects.'[1] Such a state of things exhibits the highest form of common action and common sympathy between Church and Realm that is perhaps imaginable; but it presupposes conditions that have long since disappeared, and it must be admitted that the maintenance of these normal and favourable relations did, as a matter of fact, depend on the religious convictions of a particular man and on his conscientious fulfilment of a sacred trust. Our present point, however, is that the visitatorial power of the Sovereign, in idea certainly and usually in fact, made for the efficiency of the Church, and consequently for the prosperity of the State. *Interest rei publicae ut re sua quisque bene utatur.* What is true of individual ownership and use is *a fortiori* true of a divine society which aims at making men virtuous and serviceable in all relationships of life. It manifestly conduces to the welfare of the State that the Christian Church should freely and energetically discharge its duty to the nation, and should use its resources and privileges for the objects which they were designed to promote.

It is obvious enough that in the modern State the conditions under which the Church formerly

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[1] E. A. Freeman, *Disestablishment and Disendowment: What are they?* (Macmillan), p. 31.

accepted the supremacy no longer exist. The position of the Crown in monarchical States is altered. As a *personal* power, its influence has declined, or virtually disappeared. Again, the religious conditions of the modern nation are wholly different from what they formerly were. Nation and Church are no longer coextensive, and the practical effect of keeping up the fiction that they are so is that other religious bodies enjoy a liberty of action which is denied to the historic Church. Further, the practical supremacy of Parliament has transferred the power of interference, adjudication and control in ecclesiastical matters to bodies of persons, legal or political, who in no sense represent the Church or even share her characteristic beliefs, aims and principles. The effect of this transfer has been to extinguish almost entirely the independent powers of the Church over her own members. The supremacy of the mediaeval king or emperor was calculated to assist her in the exercise of her inalienable spiritual authority. But Parliament, so far from representing the believing and friendly autocrat of earlier centuries, is no longer even what it once was, namely, a body of lay Churchmen, pledged to defend the interests of the Church against monarchical or papal encroachments.[1] It cannot be expected that the Church is likely to court or cling to alliance with the State in such sense as to admit the 'supremacy' of a mixed Parliament, or the jurisdiction of civil courts in matters spiritual. It is to be hoped that the sound view will ultimately win its way among

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[1] Cp. W. H. Abraham, *Church and State in England*, p. 89.

all classes of citizens—that the State has everything to gain by leaving the Church free to deal with its internal affairs in its own way and on its own recognised principles, the right being duly guarded of an appeal to the civil courts in any case concerning which a spiritual tribunal exceeds its jurisdiction. If the Church is really to do its duty by the nation, it must enjoy freedom to exercise discipline, to organise representative synods, to legislate for its own members, and to have an effective voice in the appointment of its chief ministers—in a word, to secure and to exercise the right of self-government.

But it is argued that the concession of such liberty by the State necessarily implies disestablishment. If the Church is to be placed on a level with other religious bodies in respect of autonomy, any special connection with the State which it now retains, with all that this involves of privilege or political power, must be abandoned. The nation, having ceased under modern conditions to be coextensive with the Church, must cease to stand in a special relation to any religious body. The State must confine itself to protecting the members of every such community in the exercise of their religious privileges, while to each it must concede adequate powers of self-government and spiritual discipline. It may be admitted that the inevitable development of the modern State in a secular direction logically involves these consequences. At the same time, it might be urged that even when the Church forms a minority of the nation, a very considerable measure of autonomy can in practice be combined with an 'established'

position, as the case of the Established Church of Scotland sufficiently proves.[1]

In reply to the further question, whether disestablishment should, as a matter of course, involve disendowment, it may be replied that the point is one which ought to be settled purely on grounds of expediency. What do the most vital interests of the State really demand? What form of relationship between the State and the Church is best calculated to promote the moral and social efficiency of the citizens? On the one hand, it may be plausibly urged that to leave a powerful, but not entirely homogeneous, body in possession of large resources and the influence which they bestow, would be an experiment dangerous both to the State and to religion. On the other hand, the cry for disendowment loses force in proportion as the Church is manifestly carrying on a work which is of solid social value to the community. The Church, indeed, on its side, is justified in regarding disendowment as a contingency which, for the sake of the masses of the poor to whom its mission extends, should be resisted to the utmost. Its revenues are held in trust for the religious and moral benefit of the nation, and cannot therefore be lightly surrendered. At the same time, the Church will make clear the point that its chief concern *is* for the poor—for those, especially in rural districts or congested town areas, who might, but for ecclesiastical endowments, be altogether deprived of proper spiritual ministrations, and who need, in fact, all that money can do

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[1] Cp. Abraham, *op. cit.* p. 247.

to bring to bear upon them such forces as may lift them above the level of mere materialism.[1]

On the other hand, those who advocate disendowment are not necessarily committed to a policy of unjust confiscation. The State is not committing 'sacrilege' when, for sufficient reasons, it thinks fit to alienate the endowments of the Church. It has absolute power, in virtue of its visitatorial discretion, to limit or alienate the use of such endowments, as of all other property whatsoever. In the last resort, as St. Ambrose expressly admits, the property of the Church belongs to the State. 'If the Emperor,' he says, 'wishes for our lands, he has power to take them ; none of us will resist him. . . . We render to Caesar what is Caesar's.'[2] To the same effect writes Bishop Butler : 'Every donation to the Christian Church is a human donation, and no more, and therefore cannot give a divine right, but such a right only as must be subject, in common with all other property, to the regulation of human laws. . . . The persons, then, who gave these lands to the Church had themselves no right of perpetuity in them, consequently could convey no such right to

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[1] Ambrose, *epist.* xxxi., alluding to the spoliation of the pagan temples, contrasts the use made of 'endowments' by the heathen and by Christians respectively : 'Possessio Ecclesiae, sumptus est egenorum. Numerent [Gentiles] quos redemerint templa captivos, quae contulerint alimenta pauperibus, quibus exulibus vivendi subsidia ministraverint.' Dante, in his *de monarchia*, iii. 10, observes that the 'vicar of Christ' can receive temporal goods 'non tanquam possessor, sed tanquam fructuum pro Ecclesia pro Christi pauperibus dispensator: quod Apostolos fecisse non ignoratur.'

[2] *orat. in Auxentium.*

the Church.'[1] Whensoever the public interest of the community urgently demands interference with property corporate or private, the State is justified in taking action; and 'against an Act of Parliament property has no sacredness at all.' Thus any talk of disendowment as 'spoliation' or 'sacrilege' is beside the mark. What can, however, be maintained (and this is the heart of the matter) is that there is no convincing evidence that disendowment would be an expedient or patriotic measure. Nor has it been proved that a Church, in some real sense *established and endowed*, yet in all essential matters *autonomous*, is an impossibility. The tendency to collision between the Church and the State is likely, as a rule, to be connected with marriage problems, educational policy, and kindred matters. But there are grounds for the belief that the practical questions involved, though grave, are not insoluble if they are approached with patience, wisdom and good faith on both sides. Churchmen are justified in holding that the entire separation of the Church from the State, considering all that it involves, would be a calamity to the nation, and a heavy blow to religion in general. It would mean not only the irrevocable disappearance of an uplifting tradition, but a serious impoverishment of national ideals.

In any case, while it is the duty of Churchmen to insist that the grave question of disestablishment

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[1] Extract from a letter of Bishop Butler, in Fitzgerald's edition of the *Analogy*, pref. p. xciii. To the same effect Freeman in *op. cit.* pp. 5 foll.

is not one of party politics, they are bound to remember that the authority of the Church and its hold on the nation depend not upon its legal position or its social influence, still less upon its endowments, utterly inadequate as these are to meet the ever-increasing needs and claims by which the Church is confronted, but upon the solidity and reality of its work and the actual measure of its moral influence. Hence the duty arises of pressing forward in every legitimate way the cause of internal Church reform, and of making known as widely as possible the exact nature of the Church's place and function in the modern State. The Church will stand beyond the reach of attack when once it is generally recognised as the home of those ideals which alone give worth and stability to national progress; the school of that type of character which alone can make political institutions subservient to the highest good of humanity; the depository of that grace and truth by which individual men are disciplined and prepared to take their part in the regeneration of society.

We may conclude the above brief discussion by inviting attention to the fact that what the State actually *is* as a moral force in the modern world, it owes in large measure to the educating influence of the Church. The State was for centuries more or less subject to the Church's direction, and gradually learned under that guidance to take the full measure of its responsibilities. The Church was at one time charged with many tasks and functions which

properly belonged to the State. It undertook, as Bishop Creighton observes, 'much business for society which society gradually grew capable of doing for itself. It is not too much to say that every beneficent organisation which the State now works for the good of the community was taken over from the Church.'[1] This, the Bishop adds, is the meaning of the phrase, 'the growth of the secular spirit.' There is nothing objectionable *per se* in this gradual transference to the State of certain departments of social work which was once carried on by religious organisations. But whereas the State is primarily concerned only with the question of expediency, the Church's task is to cherish and proclaim a characteristic view of man's nature and destiny, by which, ideally, all 'secular efforts for the improvement of social conditions ought to be inspired and guided.'

When the question is asked, 'How is this result to be attained?' the answer seems to be, Through the agency of special organisations within the Church. There are, of course, certain personal duties which devolve upon a religious man as a member of society; but practically the public recognition of great Christian *principles*, the initiation of social or moral reforms, can only be secured by special and combined effort, the aim of which is to mould public opinion and to bring pressure to bear on the State. Accordingly, it becomes a duty for Churchmen to extend active sympathy and support to any organised movement

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[1] *Persecution and Tolerance* (Longmans), p. 128.

for securing such public objects. Thus, (to take an instance), in the long run the level of commercial morality can only be permanently raised by some such special movement, designed to embody and give effect to the dictates of the corporate Christian conscience. The particular society or union is, as it were, the Church itself organised for action which can be undertaken methodically only through the agency of a trained executive. The same remark applies to missionary effort. Every Christian is obviously bound to be a missionary at heart—to recognise and so far as may be to fulfil by prayer, almsgiving, or personal service, his obligation to the non-Christian world. But for practical purposes Churchmen commit this department of Christian duty to societies or executive bodies, organised, as it were, in their name and on their behalf. Behind the activity of each society ought to lie the intercessions, sacrifices and efforts of the whole Church.

NOTE.

The Social Teaching of St. James's Epistle.

'We cannot doubt that St. James would have approved of what has already been done by the State in England to ameliorate the condition of the poorer part of the community by means of factory bills, free education, free libraries, extended franchise, etc., nor that he would have sympathised with the efforts which are now being made to give the workman a larger share of the profits of labour, and ensure to honest industry a comfortable old age. And as regards the other extreme, it seems natural to assume that he would have approved of a more careful circumscription of the supposed rights of property, and also of any

measures, consistent with justice, which would tend to check the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, such as a graduated scale in the income-tax and the death duties. Outside of the action of the State there will still remain plenty of scope for the influence of the Church in drawing classes together, making them realise more the tie of brotherhood, discountenancing wasteful self-indulgence, not less in the smoking and betting and drinking of the poor, than in the luxurious living of the rich, compelling all to recognise their responsibility to God for the use of the talents He has entrusted to them, fostering such a tone of public feeling as would make it a disgrace for men to spend their money or energy merely on their own pleasures and interests, and would encourage them to vie with one another in the promotion of art and science and literature, in making the world happier and better and more beautiful than they found it, in a word, in the advancement of God's Kingdom upon earth.' (J. B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. James*, p. 199.)

CHAPTER XVIII

SPECIAL PROBLEMS: THE QUESTION OF RELIGIOUS CONFORMITY

'Albeit the Spirit lead us into all truth, and direct us in all goodness; yet because these workings of the Spirit in us are so privy and secret, we, therefore, stand on plainer ground, when we gather by reason from the quality of things believed or done, that the Spirit of God hath directed us in both.'—HOOKER.

I

IN this book we have been mainly concerned with ideals—with things as they ought to be and might be if the characteristic ideas of Christianity exercised their legitimate influence in human affairs. In regard, however, to the problems of actual life—the question what it is right to do in particular cases and circumstances, the individual is, generally speaking, left to exercise his own reason, his own faculty of judgment, under the guidance and with the promised assistance of the Holy Spirit. By its doctrine of the Spirit, interpreting afresh from age to age the significance of the moral ideal manifested in Christ, and illuminating the faculties of individual men according to their need, Christianity recognises the progressive element in morality, or, in other words, the need that is constantly arising for the

revision, or fresh application, of moral rules, in view of the new questions and problems which emerge with the advance of civilisation and with the changing conditions of individual lives. Christianity is absolutely committed, not only by its acceptance of the Old Testament scriptures, but by its conception of the office and work of the Spirit, to the principle that the revelation both of truth and duty is progressive. It is luminously clear that the self-revelation of God has proceeded *pari passu* with the development of man's capacity to apprehend and respond to it. In fact, the process of revelation culminates in the indwelling of the Spirit in humanity; and the pressure of moral problems is continually inviting us to a more complete dependence upon His presence and guidance. It is His office to reveal the will of God in correspondence with the needs of each age, and to enable men to welcome and fulfil it. Christianity is the absolute or final religion, because it is the dispensation of the Spirit.

Any system, therefore, which should undertake to offer a ready-made solution of all moral problems that might conceivably be raised would be *ipso facto* discredited. For ethics, in their application to the practical problems of life, may be regarded as an art in which few are really proficient, since expert knowledge is the outcome of 'moral performance,' and also of special experience in one particular sphere of social action. The solution of any particular group of problems involves such wide and varied knowledge of details that even the best-informed thinkers are hampered by limitations of

insight or sympathy. It is the sense of these difficulties that has commended to philosophers the idea of a moral expert; but the point which needs emphasis is that such expert opinion can be of value only in the consideration of some special and limited class of questions; and nothing could be more disastrous than that spiritual guides should profess or be credited with a kind of omniscience. There are many questions of casuistry—for instance, those connected with commercial morality, marriage problems, the obligation to speak the truth—in which the spiritual director will not be sufficiently informed to give a safe or authoritative decision. There are cases in which the experienced and honourable physician, merchant, or man of affairs, may be a more reliable guide; cases, that is, in which experience is of more value than abstract moral theory.

What, then, is to be the Christian mode of dealing with perplexing questions of conduct? Our Lord asks the Pharisees why they do not even of themselves *judge what is right?*[1] He would have men depend, not upon external authority, but upon the guidance of their own reason and conscience. His words imply the duty of training, exercising and informing the judgment,[2] and so advancing in moral and spiritual discernment through self-discipline and the teachings of experience. He encourages the habit of moral thoughtfulness, which weighs the motives and practical issues of action and is open to fresh light; which can to a certain extent balance

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[1] St. Luke xii. 57.

[2] Heb. v. 14.

consequences, and even revise previous moral judgments in accordance with fuller knowledge.

But it is scarcely necessary to say that all this teaching as to the need of honestly using the guidance of reason and the lessons of experience is completed by the doctrine of the Spirit, who illuminates, directs and assists those who judge and act in trustful dependence upon Him. Thus we find St. Paul giving his judgment upon a *vexata quaestio:* pronouncing the decision at which he arrives after careful weighing of alternatives, but adding, *I think that I also have the Spirit of God.*[1] He commends his advice as enjoining what is on the whole 'good' under the circumstances, and as given in conscious dependence on the Source of all light and truth. On the same principle the Church as a body acts in the Council of Jerusalem. The question at issue is discussed with careful deliberation, but the actual settlement arrived at is that which *seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.*[2] In both these cases we find an example of the true Christian method. We see the faculty of reason exercising itself on a question of conduct in close dependence upon the divine guidance; we find a course recommended which is 'good' in view of present conditions, not enforced as if it were absolutely right under all circumstances;

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[1] 1 Cor. vii. 40. It has been noticed that the frequent use of δέ in 1 Cor. vii. shows that in stating general rules, the apostle is 'obliged to modify their use in particular cases.' He gives his judgment, but with the modesty of one who feels the delicacy of the problem submitted to him.

[2] Acts xv. 28.

room is left for the appeal from conscience well informed to conscience better informed. For it is obvious that 'only the judgments that are based upon complete knowledge are final.'[1]

The vindication of the rights of reason is undertaken by Hooker in antagonism to an exaggerated and unphilosophical view of Scripture as the sole authority in matters of faith and conduct. But those rights need to be defined and upheld in view of an altogether different tendency which demands notice in the present connection. The Roman Church has been apt to over-systematise its moral theology in accordance with a conception of the Church which appears to have gradually become dominant, owing to the influence of the Jesuits. If the Church is a *societas perfecta*, a self-contained and independent body, possessed of all the resources of government, it must be endued with legislative power over its members.[2] Accordingly, in the sphere of ethics, the Christian is simply required to submit to the authoritative guidance of the clergy, whose principal function is the direction of conscience. The results of this theory are seen in a purely legalistic conception of morality. 'This conception of the Church,' it has been justly said, 'exalts submission to external authority as the supreme and all-important demand of Christian ethics, sacrifices everything to this,

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[1] Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, vol. i. p. 96 (in an interesting criticism of 'Intuitionism').

[2] On this theory, see Bishop Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, lect. vii. esp. p. 344 note [2].

and looks with disfavour upon the distinctively Pauline doctrines which make the faith of the individual Christian the spring of moral initiative and the root of responsibility to God.'[1] Obedience to spiritual superiors constitutes the very essence of Christian morality; guilt attaches to 'a transgression of the law, inasmuch as God has enjoined obedience to lawful superiors.'[2] Sin is in fact regarded exclusively as the disturbance of a divinely instituted order of government. But it is easy to see how this view of sin tends to enhance the importance of the spiritual judge or adviser. His standpoint is apt to become purely *legal;* his function is to decide to what extent a positive moral law is binding; whether an act is 'permissible,' or 'sufficient,' or 'not prohibited.' Thus, finally, the penitent is left so far free that he may, if he chooses, follow the 'probable opinion' of some accepted authority rather than the stricter rule that may be pointed out by his director.[3]

How far 'Probabilism,' though authoritatively sanctioned in the Roman Church, is practically used by confessors, it is needless to conjecture. It is evident, indeed, that the Jesuits are answerable for a disastrous degradation of moral theory;

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[1] Robertson, *op. cit.* p. 345.

[2] I quote from a recent treatise, *Principia Theologiae Moralis*, by Fr. T. Slater, S. J. (Burns and Oates, 1902): 'Transgressio legis ideo est peccatum propterea quod Deus praecipit superioribus legitimis esse obediendum' (p. 116).

[3] 'Confessarius non potest imponere obligationem poenitenti quae non existit; potest tantum prudenter consulere quod perfectius est, non vero iniungere' (Slater, p. 48).

the consequences of a system which constitutes St. Alphonso of Liguori an authoritative guide in morals can be imagined.[1] Our present point, however, is that it involves an appeal to *authority* in matters of moral conduct which is not less unphilosophical than the exclusive appeal to Scripture, while it is surely more subversive of character. It is scarcely too much to say of the Jesuit moral theology that its aim is not to promote character at all, but to minimise moral obligation. In so far as it overrides the functions of the individual conscience and obscures the true meaning and issues of sin, the system involves that disparagement or 'disgrace' of reason against which Hooker protests.[2]

II

In regard to moral problems, it must suffice to have indicated in general outline the conditions of their solution without discussing them in detail. There is, however, one topic which may appropriately be considered in a book which deals with ethics from the standpoint of pastoral theology. For a teacher is bound to speak to his age in language which it understands and by which it can be moved; he must endeavour to be in intellectual touch with his contemporaries; he must

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[1] 'Potest igitur quis tuto sequi opinionem quam asserit S. Alphonsus esse probabilem, nisi constat certa lege posteriori vel declaratione S. Sedis esse antiquatam' (Slater, p. 47). See the whole section, *De Conscientia Probabili*, pp. 38–48.

[2] *Eccl. Pol.* iii. 8 § 4.

be ready to assimilate new knowledge, and quick to discern its bearing upon the truths which he is commissioned to teach. Above all, he must be a man of wide intellectual sympathy—a teacher whose theology is simplified, enlarged and verified by his experience of human life, character and spiritual needs. He ought to have that habit of mind—that 'mental and spiritual unselfishness,' as Bishop Phillips Brooks calls it—'which always conceives of truth with reference to its communication.'[1]

It is this type of mind which is likely to be specially interested in the moral aspects of religious conformity, and with the supposed conflict between the claims of modern knowledge and the obligations of an accredited teacher of religion. This problem can seldom have been entirely in abeyance—at least since the fifteenth century—but the immense extension and diffusion of knowledge during the last century has brought it to an acute stage. Modern methods of education have awakened and trained in large and ever-increasing numbers of people the scientific habit of mind and the historical sense. In all departments of investigation there is a tendency to use the historical method, to sift and to criticise authorities, to prefer ascertained facts to theories. The standard of what is meant by knowledge has been raised. Of all teachers, secular or religious, is required a greater accuracy of thought, cogency of proof and lucidity of statement

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[1] *Lectures on Preaching* (Allenson), p. 39; cp. J. M. Wilson, *Lectures on Pastoral Theology*, pp. 8 foll.

than was customary in 'pre-scientific' days. In discussing matters of religion, men are impatient of arguments which have become discredited in other spheres of inquiry. And while there is a growing dislike of dogmatic statements, and indeed of anything that seems to imply finality in revelation, there is a real respect for truths which have found their verification in the spiritual experience of ages, or are perceived to be in vital correspondence with the actual needs of the moral life.

But two consequences of the scientific movement are specially worthy of note. On the one hand, it has led to widespread disillusionment. Science has seemed to promise so much, and has effected so little—at least for the masses of mankind. It has not removed—nay, it has even aggravated to some extent—the social evils which civilisation brings in its train; the benefits it has conferred have been balanced by formidable ills; to the distressed, the perplexed, the helpless and submerged classes it has brought no gospel. On the other hand, the growth of science has greatly deepened the sense of mystery in things. We have come to realise the fragmentariness of our knowledge; and the 'positive' type of mind, which rejects miracle on evidential grounds, is combined with an 'agnostic' temper which would endorse Professor Huxley's remark: 'Nobody can presume to say what the order of nature must be. . . . No one is entitled to say *a priori* that any so-called miraculous event is impossible.'[1]

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[1] *The Nineteenth Century* for November, 1887, p. 628.

Such is the mental atmosphere which continually occasions a fresh demand either for the 're-statement' of Christian doctrine or for some assurance of 'honesty' in its accredited teachers. The scientific spirit is awake and almost every thoughtful mind has felt its touch. The conceptions of the universe, under the influence of which the catholic creed gradually attained its present form, have passed away; and most educated men, consciously or unconsciously, read into its clauses ideas far removed from those of its original compilers and adherents. These clauses, so far as they imply physical conceptions that are obsolete, are interpreted metaphorically. We find no difficulty in holding that such phrases as 'came down from heaven,' 'ascended into heaven,' 'descended into hell,' correspond to real facts of the spiritual world which were independent of local conditions. They express symbolically, in terms of physical experience, movements and actions of spirit, or, more strictly, interactions of spirit with matter; and we find in practice that the ancient clauses quite easily adapt themselves to the modern point of view.

Some such answer may be given to the assertion that our creed is irrevocably bound up with childlike and anthropomorphic conceptions of God. Its dogmatic statements have imperceptibly changed their connotation while retaining their original form; and the principle has silently established itself that a large measure of freedom is permissible in the interpretation which individual Christians may place upon the articles of their belief. To insist

upon one rigid and absolutely uniform construction of these statements is felt to be an infringement of liberty, and it does violence to that sense of mystery —of 'moving about in worlds not realised'—which is characteristic of every educated mind.

But assuming that freedom must be allowed for the thoughtful interpretation or 'elaboration of faith,'[1] the question arises how far this liberty is to be extended. On one point there would be general agreement, namely, that there is a legitimate distinction to be drawn between the position of the Christian layman and that of the accredited teacher of religion. The layman who conforms to a particular ecclesiastical system may do so for various reasons; but he does not commit himself to more than a general sympathy with the aims and objects of the body to which he professes to belong.[2] He may feel the spiritual blessing or the moral stimulus that comes from maintaining his connection with an organised society of Christians; but he is rightly exempted from the necessity of making any public profession of the belief which is presupposed in the fact of his membership, and which, by common consent, admits of a certain latitude of interpretation. Most persons would agree with Professor Sidgwick in thinking it right 'that in determining the scope of the obligation imposed by the creeds, the utmost breadth of interpretation should be granted, the utmost variety of meanings allowed, which the usage of language, especially the vagueness of many

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[1] See Pfleiderer, *Evolution and Theology, etc.* p. 171.

[2] Cp. Sidgwick, *Practical Ethics*, p. 138.

fundamental notions, will fairly admit.'[1] At the same time, a layman is bound to face honestly the moral claim of the truth as truth—in other words, to remember his personal responsibility for his belief. He is bound to guard against all wilful prejudice, mere love of criticism and 'shortness of thought'; still more against indolence, indifference and moral inconsistency. He will bear in mind that even the simplest form of Christian creed carries with it the obligation of a serious effort to *live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.*[2] He will endeavour to give effect to his membership in a spiritual body, sharing its worship, its hopes, its aims and activities, seeking its highest welfare and defending its liberties. Such an attitude is consistent with a very large measure of 'liberalism' in religious thought;[3] indeed, it is characteristic of the English Church that it welcomes both a free examination of its claims and an intelligent independence of mind in the acceptance of them; and practically no one has a fair right to complain that freedom of thought and vigorous individuality are unduly repressed by the Anglican system.

The case of the clergy, however, is admittedly somewhat different, and in their case the 'liberty of prophesying' is limited by the unquestionable fact that they are the official exponents and defenders of the doctrines of the Christian Church. It is

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[1] *Practical Ethics*, p. 140.

[2] Tit. ii. 12.

[3] The point of view of 'lay liberalism' is temperately described by Professor Gardner, in *Anglican Liberalism*, pp. 135 foll.

commonly agreed that 'what a candidate for Orders must be taken to pledge himself to is the essential doctrines of Christianity as understood by the Church to whose ministry he aspires.'[1] This statement is obviously ambiguous and leads to inevitable discussion. Meanwhile, however, it is fair to remember that a man may enter holy orders prompted by different motives, all of them good. A man of character and capacity may well feel himself drawn to the service of a religion which touches modern civilisation at every point, brings him into contact with every class and condition of men, and confronts moral and intellectual problems of life with a rational and coherent faith. He may realise that he has gifts that specially qualify him for some special branch of service in the ministry—for mission work or social work among the poor, for apologetic preaching, for teaching, for the religious life. But in any case, whatever be his idea of the work, he finds himself confronted by a claim upon his loyalty which he cannot set aside. The society which he desires to serve and represent in his sphere of activity is, above all, a *witnessing* body. It is charged with a definite message to mankind; it is called to guard and to proclaim certain definite doctrines; and though it is evident that truth will wear different aspects at different stages of human culture and development, yet the truth to which

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[1] I purposely quote the words of Dr. Rashdall, in *Anglican Liberalism*, p. 94, because I am not satisfied with his solution of 'the real difficulty' which arises 'when we proceed to ask, What are essential and what are unessential doctrines?' (*ibid.*).

the Christian Church bears testimony must have unchanging elements corresponding to the permanent conditions of human life. Accordingly, the Church is bound, in the delegation of the teaching office to her ministers, to provide that nothing is taught under her authority which contradicts or impairs the 'deposit' of faith committed to her charge; in other words, she cannot allow to her accredited ministers 'an irresponsible liberty of speculation.'[1] It is for this reason that, as Bishop Creighton points out, the Church is always apt to *appear* intolerant; but it would obviously be contradictory to the very nature of such a society if it so far yielded to the intellectual restlessness of any particular age as to regard the doctrines of the faith as open questions. The clergy are free within certain limits—nay, it is their duty—to *interpret* the terms of the Church's message, but in its substance the message is plainly unalterable. It can only be developed 'along its own lines.'[2]

Such being the position, the first duty of a candidate for the sacred ministry is to cultivate the sense of proportion. The fact must not be overlooked that within the area of the Church's faith there are truths of primary and secondary importance; there are matters of fact and matters of opinion; there are statements in the formularies of the Church which must be qualified and interpreted, not only by their context and historical antecedents, but also by a comprehensive view of

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[1] Creighton, *Persecution and Tolerance*, p. 127.

[2] See Fr. Tyrrell in *Contemporary Review* for May, 1909.

the Church's teaching as a whole, and (it may be added) by sympathy with the Church's whole *mind.*

This reflection is specially apposite in connection with a document like the *Quicunque vult.* From William Chillingworth downwards, a number of conscientious and well-disposed men have been for a time or altogether hindered from taking holy orders by the obligation of using publicly a formulary which contains certain minatory clauses.

Now, in discussing this point with a conscientious objector, it is usual to urge such considerations as the following: (1) that the statements of the *Quicunque vult* must be limited by the general tenor of the Church's teaching, tested by which the clauses in question, 'in their *prima facie* meaning and in the minds of many who hear them, convey a more unqualified statement than Scripture warrants, and one which is not consonant with the language of the greatest teachers of the Church';[1] (2) that in view of the history of the document and the circumstances under which its public use was ordered in the English Church, there is a considerable body of weighty opinion, clerical and lay, favourable to the disuse, or at least to the restricted use, of the formulary;[2] (3) that a quasi-authoritative

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[1] See the statement drawn up by the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury in 1904 (*Chron. of Convocation*, 1904, no. 391). In a report accepted by the Lambeth Synod of 1908, it is stated that 'the use or disuse of this hymn cannot be made one of the terms of Communion' (*Report*, p. 129).

[2] On this point it may suffice to refer to two recent works: Dean Armitage Robinson's *Some Thoughts on the Athanasian Creed* (Longmans); and Mr. C. H. Turner's admirable book, *The*

explanation of the minatory clauses, limiting their application to *wilful and deliberate* rejection of the doctrine contained in the Creed, is very widely —indeed, almost universally—accepted.[1] On the whole, in view of the common understanding which prevails as to the limitations of the *Quicunque vult* and the acknowledged difficulties connected with its use in the public worship of the Church, a candidate would seem to be over-scrupulous who should decline ordination merely on this ground.[2]

Objections of a similar or analogous kind are often urged against the use of 'imprecatory' psalms in church, and against certain expressions or petitions in the occasional Offices. In regard to these, again, it is enough to say that they afford no valid pretext for declining a vocation for which, on all other grounds, a man may be admirably qualified.

The instance of the *Quicunque vult* may suffice to illustrate the need of a sense of proportion in

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History and Use of Creeds and Anathemas in the Early Centuries of the Church (S.P.C.K.).

[1] Bishop Gore writes: 'In reciting these clauses with a large qualification which is not expressed, I am certainly only doing what the Church which commissions me bids me to do. At the same time, I think this unexpressed qualification leads to so much misunderstanding and scandal, that the clauses in question are unsuitable for public recitation' (*The New Theology and the Old Religion*, p. 163 note).

[2] Professor Sidgwick goes so far as to say that 'however little any individual clergyman may think that this [explanatory] declaration represents the meaning of the clauses, it would, in my opinion, be now over-scrupulous in him to make a difficulty about reciting the creed on account of these clauses' (*Practical Ethics*, p. 69).

considering the question of conformity. But the difficulties felt by conscientious men of 'liberal' or 'progressive' opinions in matters of religious thought may be stated in a more direct and concrete form. So far as religion is concerned, the effect of the far-reaching revolution of ideas which the recent extension of knowledge has brought about, has manifested itself chiefly in a new attitude towards Scripture and towards the creed of Christendom. It is not merely that the scientific study of history and the art of interpretation have made vast progress. Speaking broadly, the idea of evolution has simply transformed our view of the universe and of the divine dealings with our race, but it is wholly unnecessary for our present purpose to attempt any summary description of the intellectual changes brought about by the evolutionary mode of thought. The ethical question which alone concerns us admits of comparatively simple statement: What moral obligations does the public profession of belief in the doctrines of the Church involve?[1]

As regards the modern position of the Bible, the main facts are sufficiently familiar. There is a widespread acceptance among Churchmen of the critical standpoint. A silent revolution of thought has modified traditional ideas of what is meant by inspiration, of the precise nature and date of the various

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[1] Professor Sidgwick states the question thus: 'The duty which the persons who form the progressive—or, to use a neutral term, the deviating—element in a religious community owe to the rest of that community' (*Practical Ethics*, p. 113). I am, however, dealing with the problem only so far as it concerns the clergy.

books of Scripture, of the circumstances under which they assumed their final form. There is a real disposition to recognise that our newly acquired knowledge has rather aided and enriched faith than hindered it. In particular, the use of critical methods and the study of its results have illustrated and enforced the very fruitful idea of progressive revelation. The evolutionary view of the Old Testament has aided faith partly by removing or explaining many moral difficulties, partly by vindicating the wisdom and goodness manifested in the process of divine self-revelation. The criticism of the New Testament has, on the whole, established the good faith and general trustworthiness of the different writers, and it has enabled us to appreciate the different aspects under which they present the central facts of the Christian gospel. Generally speaking, our idea of the real office and function of Scripture, our estimate of its authority as a standard of faith, is more intelligent and discriminating than it could be in 'pre-critical' days. Some forms, at any rate, of the appeal to Scripture are hopelessly discredited. We do not look to the Bible for exact history in the modern sense, nor for a scientific account of the origins of the universe or of humanity, nor for explicit and detailed rules for the governance of states and churches. We have learned, with Hooker, that 'the absolute perfection of Scripture is seen by relation unto that end whereto it tendeth . . . a full instruction in all things unto salvation necessary.'[1] Thus the difficulty sometimes felt by

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[1] *Eccl. Pol.* ii. 8, § 5. In view of the exaggerated estimate of

those who are required to answer the question addressed to deacons in the Ordinal: 'Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testament?' is not very formidable. The primary question here is one not of intellectual belief, but of moral conviction. The purport of the inquiry is, Do you accept the scriptures as containing the vital principles of true religion, and as witnessing to the essentials of faith and holiness? The words are to be undoubtedly interpreted in the light of the more explicit question addressed to candidates for the priesthood.[1] In effect, aspirants to the teaching office are required to express publicly the conviction that the Bible is the unerring record of the divine *way of salvation;* that it teaches in very various forms (πολυτρόπως καὶ πολυμερῶς) the fundamentals of true religion and morality. The profession of belief does not commit those who make it to any particular theory of inspiration, nor to a belief in the literal and equal accuracy of all the historical statements which the Bible contains. It does not preclude them from applying to the morality of the Old Testament the test which has been learned in

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Scripture which Hooker opposes, it is worth while to quote Harnack, *The Expansion of Christianity* [E.T.], i. p. 353: 'Christianity, unlike Islam, never was and never came to be the religion of a book in the strict sense of the term. Not until a much later period, that of rigid Calvinism, did the consequences of its formation as the religion of a book become really dangerous, and even then the rule of faith remained at the helm.'

[1] 'Are you persuaded that the holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ?' etc.

the school of Christ. It simply acknowledges that 'the Bible, as a whole, records and contains the message of God in all its stages of delivery.'[1] If further assurance be needed that this view of the question in the Ordinal is legitimate, we may quote the deliberate opinion of Professor Sidgwick: 'Any one who accepts the canonical books, in any real sense whatever, as a divinely inspired source of religious teaching, may with perfect veracity make the deacon's declaration, although disbelieving many statements made in these books as to historical facts.'[2]

We turn to the more difficult question, What are the essential doctrines of Christianity which a candidate for holy orders pledges himself to believe? We have already pointed out that whatever ideas the clauses of the creeds conveyed to those who originally compiled them, and either employed them as a baptismal test or assigned them a place in the public worship of the Church,—the historical statements contained in them have, as a matter of fact, admitted of considerable latitude of interpretation; they have been interpreted partly by the growing spiritual experience of the Christian society, partly by the fresh light thrown upon them by scientific discoveries. In particular, it seems to be true, broadly speaking, that the idea of evolution, with all that it implies, has tended to revive the doctrine of

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[1] Bishop Gore, in his Charge, *The Spiritual Efficiency of the Church* (1904), p. 71. He quotes a very similar statement from a Charge of the late Bishop of Oxford (Dr. Stubbs).

[2] *Practical Ethics*, p. 165.

the divine immanence, and the various attempts that have been made to re-state or re-interpret the Christian creed have, in the main, followed the line of thought which we usually connect with the 'Alexandrine' theology, and with Augustine so far as his thought takes the same direction.[1] In this respect, too, the Cambridge Platonists are the precursors of our leading present-day apologists.[2] For these thinkers, at least, the language of a creed which is sometimes said to have its basis in an ancient and untenable theory of the world, did not appear incompatible with a deeper and truer philosophy.

But, again, the question will be asked, Are there practically no limits to this liberty of interpretation? The answer has been already indicated in outline. The Church is commissioned to deliver a certain message to the world, the essential elements of which are embodied in the creeds. The Christian life is rooted in certain historic facts, and though these may admit of more than one interpretation, they cannot be substantially *denied* by a commissioned teacher of the Church without a breach of trust.

It has been very justly insisted that 'primarily, each man must judge for himself' the point at which it becomes 'spiritually expedient' for him to decline or withdraw from the position of an accredited

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[1] See A. L. Moore, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 100 foll.

[2] A typical statement may be found in John Smith's discourse *Of the existence and nature of God*, chap. v. (*Select Discourses*, London, 1660, p. 145).

teacher in the Church.[1] He is supposed to be justified in retaining his office by the existence of a 'common understanding' that the profession of Christian belief does not necessarily imply a literal acceptance of all the statements contained in the Church's formularies. But the creeds are commonly and rightly supposed to stand on a basis of their own: they contain in summary form the actual *message* which the Church is commissioned to deliver; and to publicly question or reject a statement of the creed is to be so far out of sympathy with the Church's mind and disqualified to teach in her name. What is sometimes claimed nowadays in the name of 'liberal thought' is the right not merely to interpret, but to *deny* certain articles of the creed; and while professing belief in certain facts, to privately hold or even publicly declare them to be incredible.

Doubtless the wisest and most honest course for an aspirant to the teaching office, whose belief is disturbed by the results of scientific or historical research, is to ask himself how far he is really in sympathy with that entire system of *ideas* which Christianity represents--ideas which are connected together in a definite and coherent system, and which imply certain presuppositions which render them profoundly rational and congruous with the observed facts of man's spiritual condition and history. In particular, does he share that conception of the divine nature and character and of the moral needs of humanity, which regards miracle as a natural, credible,

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[1] See Dr. Rashdall, in *Anglican Liberalism*, p. 101.

and even essential element in revelation? or that view of the uniqueness of Christ's personality which recognises in His supernatural Birth and Resurrection[1] antecedent congruity and probability? These ideas are definite and intelligible, and are to be tested not only by historical evidence, but by due consideration of their correspondence with the spiritual needs and moral experience of mankind. And as a matter of fact, those to whom the miraculous element in revelation is an offence, generally approach the subject of religion with quite other presuppositions, suggested by a different conception of the universe and of the conditions under which a divine self-revelation is possible;[2] and if, as the result of impartial thought and study, a man feels himself compelled to reject either the Virgin Birth or the Resurrection, he is surely disqualified for the official position of a teacher in the Church.[3] He may be fitted for valuable and fruitful service as a layman, but we may apply to his case the words used in another

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[1] The resurrection being understood to imply *transitus non reditus*—not the mere resuscitation of a dead man, but the 'passing over' of Christ's humanity into the sphere of spirit—a sphere in which the spiritualised body is subject to spiritual laws and conditions. This corresponds to the profound teaching of St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 37 foll.).

[2] It is a significant fact that rejection of the Virgin Birth is apt to be closely associated with a denial of Christ's sinlessness and of the uniqueness of Christianity. See, for instance, Dr. Estlin Carpenter, *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, lect. viii. esp. pp. 501 foll. Cp. Professor Orr's essay on 'The Miraculous Conception and Modern Thought,' in *Ritschlianism*, pp. 221 foll.

[3] This I understand to be exactly the view of Professor Sidgwick in *Practical Ethics*, pp. 140, 141.

connection by St. Paul: he *is happier if he abide as he is, after my judgment.*[1] On the other hand, it is possible for a man to be ordained, holding his judgment in suspense on minor points. In any case, the effect of the present intellectual 'atmosphere' upon a teacher will probably be to *simplify* his creed, and to render him very modest in his exposition of it. He will teach clearly and confidently; but an underlying consciousness of the mystery of things, and of the many-sidedness of truth, will always guard him from a hard, narrow and unyielding dogmatism. The lack of modesty usually displays itself in *over-definition*, untempered rigidity of view, undue familiarity of tone; whereas the mark of the educated mind is an habitual sense of the limitations to which even the fullest knowledge is subject, and of the 'entangled and complicated character of all human questions.'[2] This habit of mind will check that 'dreadful certainty' which is such a hindrance to religion.[3] In regard to a large number of religious

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[1] 1 Cor. vii. 40.

[2] Church, *Human Life and its Conditions*, p. 164. It is noteworthy that the recoil from over-definition appears very early in the history of the Reformation. See the anecdote of Colet related by Erasmus (Note at the close of the chapter); and cp. Bishop Andrewes' complaint addressed to Bellarmine: 'Nobis non tam *articulosa* fides quam vestris hominibus, qui ad theses singulas crepant, Est de fide' (*Respons. ad Bellarm.* p. 26).

[3] Bishop Phillips Brooks writes: 'The dreadful certainty of some people grows terrible to me' (*Life*, by A. G. V. Allen, ii. p. 38). So Dean Church (*Life*, p. 146): 'The idea of perfect and absolute knowledge which is involved in so much of what is said and taught on all sides becomes daily more and more unendurable to me.'

questions it may be the wisest and most courageous course to maintain an *agnostic* standpoint: to say frankly, 'I do not know.'

The personal and ethical problem briefly discussed in this chapter is closely connected with matters of *ecclesiastical discipline*. But these do not concern us here. We may observe, however, that the Church is confronted with a twofold task. On the one hand there is the question how to train candidates for the ministry in such a way as to foster in them something of the scientific temper, with its candour, its breadth of view, its patient and open-eyed attention to facts; yet at the same time to strengthen their hold on the central Christian ideas and facts which are embodied in the Creed. On the other hand there is the problem of dealing with present-day 'clerical liberalism'—of meeting satisfactorily its just claims while repudiating what is unreasonable in its demand. While regard should undoubtedly be paid to 'the actual state of religious opinion' in the community which the 'liberal-minded' clergyman or candidate for holy orders proposes to serve;[1] it is even more important that he should bear in mind the actual scope and contents of the unchanging *message* which the Church is commissioned to deliver to the world. There is, unquestionably, a point at which liberty of speculation ceases to be compatible with loyalty to the faith with which Christianity is identified. And if doctrinal freedom is not to result in doctrinal chaos, the responsibility of deciding this delicate

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[1] See Rashdall in *Anglican Liberalism*, p. 101.

point must ultimately rest with the rulers of the Church, to whom is committed both the *charisma veritatis* and the *ius magisterii*.

The question cannot be further discussed here. But we may, in conclusion, appropriately emphasise the fact that the teacher of religious truth is, of all men, chiefly bound to hold his convictions firmly, but with a mind open to fresh light. We have learned from experience gained in many departments of knowledge the progressiveness of revelation; and the Church is a living witness and monument of the continuous guidance of that Spirit who reveals and interprets in each successive generation the mind of Christ.

A similar progressiveness is to be looked for in the sphere of ethics. Not only truth, but duty also, assumes new aspects under new conditions of life and thought. Each age has its special trials and opportunities; but each is entrusted with the same task—*τὰ διαφέροντα δοκιμάζειν*: to find out and fulfil what the time requires; 'to mark the seasons,' and await the manifestation of 'Him that is above every season, the Eternal, the Invisible, who for our sake became visible.'[1]

NOTE.

Dean Colet on Thomas Aquinas (*Erasmi et al. Epist.* lib. xv. ep. 14).

'Thomae tamen, nescio qua de causa, iniquior erat quam Scoto. Etenim cum hunc apud illum aliquando laudarem ut inter

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[1] Ignat. *ep. ad Polyc.* 3: *τοὺς καιροὺς καταμάνθανε· τὸν ὑπὲρ καιρὸν προσδόκα, τὸν ἄχρονον, τὸν ἀόρατον, τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς ὁρατόν.*

recentiores non aspernandum . . . semel atque iterum dissimulavit obticescens. Verum ubi rursus in alio colloquio inculcarem eadem vehementius, obtuitus est me, velut observans serione haec dicerem necne; cum animadverteret me ex animo loqui tanquam afflatus spiritu quodam, 'Quid tu,' inquit, 'mihi praedicas istum, qui nisi habuisset multum arrogantiae, non tanta temeritate tantoque supercilio definisset omnia? et nisi habuisset aliquid spiritus mundani, non ita Christi doctrinam sua profana philosophia contaminasset.' Admiratus sum hominis impetum, coepique diligentius eius viri scripta evolvere. Quid verbis opus est? omnino decessit aliquid meae de illo existimationi.'

The following passage from Fr. Tyrrell, *Lex Orandi*, p. 215, may be fittingly subjoined:—

'The Church cannot be a child again; yet her progress is ever towards a more deeply intelligent and deliberate appropriation of that infused simplicity of aim, spirit and method that characterised her childhood. To this end it was needful that the first simple forms of thought and life in which her spirit was manifested should give place to an organic complexity in which the unity of that spirit was seemingly lost, to be eventually found and recognised as persisting unbroken under all these diverse manifestations of its inexhaustible potentiality; that ever and again she should learn through solicitude about many things the sovereign value of the one thing needful, of that best part which shall not be taken from her.'

CONCLUSION

'*Gloria Dei vivens homo: vita hominis visio Dei.*'—IRENAEUS.

THE supreme end and aim of Christianity is the communication of power. The Gospel is not merely a revelation of the divine nature,—rich, satisfying, many-sided, and corresponding profoundly to the complex needs of humanity; nor merely a system of ethics,—spiritual, comprehensive, and in the truest sense practical. It is a principle of life, of energy, of movement; it heightens vitality; it makes for efficiency in work and for greatness of character. The Gospel is *the power of God unto salvation. The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.*[1] Christianity has made its impression on the world by the vividness and simplicity of its leading ideas, and of these the most pregnant and distinctive is the idea of a self-communication of God to man. Christian theology culminates in the doctrine of the indwelling of God in humanity: the might of the Spirit working in human hearts and strengthening them to receive, to know, to act, and to endure. It is significant that in his prayer for the Ephesian church, St. Paul does not desire only or chiefly the spiritual enlightenment of his converts, nor their protection and support amid the fiery trials of life

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[1] Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. iv. 20.

in a great heathen city, nor even the growth in them of the graces of brotherly love and unity of spirit. His instinct tells him that they need something more effectual than knowledge, more sustaining than the temper of tranquil dependence on God, more stimulating even than fellowship in a holy community. They need, and the Gospel of Christ offers them, the gift of the indwelling presence of Deity. What, therefore, the Apostle seeks for them in his prayer is a capacity not so much to act as to receive; strength to open the door without reserve to One who comes not primarily to instruct or to console, but to make for Himself a habitation in the inmost recesses of man's personality; to dwell there in the fulness of divine force, as a transforming and enabling principle of life.

The gift of *power*, then, is the end of all God's dealings with man, the climax of His self-manifestation; and we have seen that the desire of power finds a legitimate place in Christian ethics. The phrase 'to be ambitious' (φιλοτιμεῖσθαι) is one of those which has been rescued from base associations and ennobled by the Gospel, like the words πτῶχος, τάπεινος, ἀρεσκεία, and others. And it is noteworthy that the usage of the word in the New Testament is peculiar to the very Apostle in whose writings the word 'power' continually recurs as a kind of watchword or key-note; who not only felt himself to be a living monument of God's redemptive might, but whose characteristic message to Churches and individuals is, *Be strong.*[1] Three times he

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[1] 1 Cor. xvi. 13; Eph. vi. 10; 2 Tim. ii. 1.

employs the word φιλοτιμεῖσθαι, and his application of it seems to suggest some practical aims which, under the actual circumstances of our time, may fittingly guide the Christian conscience, and serve as a rule both of thought and desire. Thus St. Paul writes in one place : *Study—make it your aim—to be quiet and to do your own business.* In another he describes himself as *making it* his *aim to preach the gospel not where Christ was already named.* In a third he says, *We make it our aim whether at home or absent to be well-pleasing unto him.*[1]

It is not difficult to trace a natural connection between these three passages and to note how they correspond to three stages in the moral life. There is, first, the concentration of interests, purposes, and efforts ; the deliberate acceptance of vocation, and of the discipline which it involves. Next follows in due course the life of altruistic service, described in its largest aspect as the proclamation of a gospel —the carrying of a message of good into some unreclaimed region of life. Lastly, in recalling the true Christian *motive*, the Apostle seems to contemplate a gradual advance from multiplicity of interests to that singleness or simplicity of purpose which results from the habitual recollection of God and His will ; that simplicity which regards all service as rendered *unto the Lord* and all life as guided by His eye. We may notice, too, that each of these objects of Christian endeavour represents a particular form of *power*. Power may be manifested either in the efficient fulfilment of personal

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[1] 1 Thess. iv. 11 ; Rom. xv. 20 ; 2 Cor. v. 9.

vocation; or in the aggressive work which brings the organising force of truth to bear upon the disorders of the world; or again in the progressive 'unification' of personality which results from the deliberate subordination of impulse and desire to a single principle of action.

Each of these forms of power is a legitimate object of Christian ambition; each deserves closer attention.

1. *Study to be quiet, and to do your own business.* This is an injunction which, it is easy to perceive, makes for strength and needs strength for its fulfilment. A 'strong' character results from the resolute concentration of faculties on the attainment of a definite end; and this, as Professor T. H. Green points out, though it does not necessarily mean goodness, is at least a necessary condition of goodness.[1] The primary task of personality is to resist those influences which make for division of mind and consequent dissipation of energy. Men need at every stage of their moral progress to attend to the idea of life as a whole, and to realise, by a continual exercise of faith, the effect of what they actually experience or achieve in the present, on the complete and perfect fulfilment of their appointed task. The training of the body, the discipline of the will, the culture of mental and spiritual faculties, —all these demand concentration of purpose if personality is to be raised to its highest pitch of serviceableness. Moreover the Gospel promotes efficiency by encouraging each individual to consider

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[1] *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 123.

the *social* purpose of his peculiar gift or function; he that ministers to others is urged to devote himself to his ministry; he that teaches, to his teaching; he that giveth is to do it with simplicity; *he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.*[1] Each individual has his own special experience, his own peculiar discipline; to each is assigned his own separate place and function in the body, in order that, through the personality of each, some aspect of the divine character may be manifested, some ray of the divine truth transmitted. *Gloria Dei vivens homo.* The first duty of a Christian is to be his best self; to speak the word that is most truly and deeply his own;[2] to bring to bear upon the varied tasks and problems of life a personality raised to its highest level by its self-dedication to God.

St. Paul's advice to the Thessalonians is not inopportune at a time like the present. It not only suggests a rule by which the training and discipline of character should be guided; it has a direct bearing upon the actual problems of a modern industrial community. It implies the abnormality of a state of things in which unemployment on a large scale is a chronic factor; it sets a standard of social obligation. The principle *πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια* is very far-reaching. It includes at once the diligent discharge of personal obligations and careful concern for the well-being of those with whom a man is associated in his particular 'business.' The rule

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[1] Rom. xii. 7.

[2] Cp. Martineau, *National Duties, etc.* p. 397.

thus points to a twofold duty—the duty of fidelity and thoroughness in the work which each is called to undertake; and the duty of measuring and fulfilling aright the opportunities which the work offers. St. Paul's direction actually stands in close connection with an injunction to brotherly love; and the Apostle proceeds to remind his readers of the impression made upon *them that are without*, by the spectacle of a practical Christianity which makes for efficiency and for perpetual extension of the area of social good.[1]

Such, then, is the Christian's primary task—the due culture of personality and the efficient discharge of a function assigned by God. And the fulfilment of it demands *quietness*. The growth of moral power depends, in the first instance, on receptiveness—on passive self-surrender to a divine influence.[2] It is in the combination of quietness with activity that the Christian comes to resemble his Master. The two complementary aspects of the moral life meet in Him who is *semper agens*, *semper quietus*—ever moving tranquilly from work to work; without restlessness or impatience, feverish haste or division

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[1] 1 Thess. iv. 9, 12.

[2] Cp. Moberly, *The Atonement and Personality*, p. 320 f.: 'Nor is Christian personality attained, through effort, by those who, but for effort, had it not. There is indeed Christian effort, and there is imitation of Christ. But these are rather the necessary outcome than the producing cause of the Spirit of Christ. It is by His initiation rather than ours, and by acts of His power rather than ours, that we were first brought into relation with Him, and that His Spirit is progressively imparted to us. . . . Essentially, we are throughout receivers, not workers.' To the same effect Illingworth, *Reason and Revelation*, p. 212 f.

of mind; accomplishing the work assigned Him without waste of energy or loss of opportunity; doing 'all things well,' that is, opportunely, thoroughly, in due time and in due measure; the outward activity being ever sustained and intensified by unbroken communion with God, and by perfect dependence on the leading of the divine Spirit. The need of the time is patient and faithful work, but work fulfilled in the spirit of prayer. 'The call to modern men is not to *do* more; it is to *be* more.' Our need is to 'learn to do the next thing well, and leave God to make it perfect.'[1] Our wisdom is not to devise ingenious and revolutionary schemes of reform, but to give practical attention to the task that lies immediately before us. The circumstances of the time warn us—

> *. . . τὸ πρὸς ποσὶ σκοπεῖν*
> *μεθέντας ἡμᾶς τἀφανῆ.*[2]

But diligence in the fulfilment of duty must be coupled with a certain passivity or expectancy of soul; with that patient abiding in Christ which is the essential condition of moral fruitfulness,[3] and that watchfulness which looks in present conditions and opportunities for tokens of the divine purpose.

2. The duty of social service is described by St. Paul in a very comprehensive phrase. His aim, he says, is to bring a message of good where the

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[1] S. Barnett, *The Service of God*, p. 261. Cp. *Towards Social Reform*, introd. p. 9.

[2] Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 130.

[3] St. John xv. 1 foll.

name of Christ is not already made known. The life of active compassion essentially means the proclaiming of Christ as the Saviour of life and the Healer of human sorrow. The 'message of good' which a Christian brings to the world is, in the first instance, his own personality, kindled and enriched by its dedication to Christ. The life of a Christian is a living gospel;[1] and the actual conditions in which he is placed will show him where his message is specially needed, and what precise form it should take. The essence of Christian social service is, in fact, the giving of self; and when we say that philanthropy needs to be guided by wisdom and experience, we mean that we must bring to the world's aid *the whole Christ*—not merely His pity and tenderness, but His deep circumspection, His divine insight into men's real needs, His unfailing reverence for personality. For the Christian message of good embraces human nature in its entirety, as the experience of the mission field has repeatedly shown. The religions of heathendom, as a rule, lack the element of altruism. The primary impulse to social amendment is lacking, and age-long miseries and wrongs continue unabated and unassuaged because the fountain of pity is sealed.[2]

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[1] Cp. Cyp. *ad Donat. de gratia*, 2: 'Cum vero de Domino Deo vox est, vocis pura sinceritas non eloquentiae viribus nititur ad fidei argumenta, sed rebus.'

[2] Cp. Meredith Townsend, quoted by Canon C. H. Robinson, *Human Nature a Revelation of the Divine*, p. 4 note: '"The substantial difference," said a great pundit once to me, "between the English and us is not intellectual at all. We are the brighter, if anything, but you have pity, and we have not."' Again, 'Want

'Salvation,' as we have seen, means the emancipation of manhood in its entirety from all that blights its promise and mars its perfection; and, consequently, no effort to ameliorate the material conditions of life is without spiritual significance. In the evangelisation of the world, for instance, the arts of medicine or sanitation are not merely credentials of the Gospel. In a sense they are elements of the Gospel itself, in so far as they tend to *save life*, to remove the obstacles which hinder the message of good from penetrating hearts and transforming character, and to prepare the way for the kingdom of God by arresting attention, by rousing expectancy, by quieting the importunate clamour of merely material needs. But the essence of the Gospel is the proclamation of Christ; the consecration of every department of life by the influence of His Spirit; the judgment of all human things in union with His mind. The task of Christendom is to bear persistent witness to the spiritual basis of life; to keep alive in civilised society a sense of the reality of spiritual forces, and so to foster the temper of aspiration.[1] Nor does the proclamation of such a gospel of good as the modern world needs, imply barrenness or poverty of theology. On the contrary, the Christ, whose indwelling presence and all-pervading influence is

of the power of sympathy is the root of all evil (in the Eastern character),' etc.

[1] Bishop Creighton, shortly before his death, replied, in answer to a question: 'I have no doubt what is *the* greatest danger [of the new century]; it is the absence of high aspirations' (*Life*, vol. ii. p. 463).

the crown and fulfilment of human desire—the Christ in and through whom God Himself makes His abode among men—cannot be the Christ of mere humanitarianism : the brother-man ; the human teacher, whose spiritual genius enables him to find for himself, and to point out to fellow-seekers after truth, the way of life ; the inspired prophet who proclaims at all costs the will of God and perishes by a martyr's death. The Christ who brings God near to men, who satisfies their needs, who fulfils their destiny and who leads them to spiritual victory, can be nothing less nor lower than the glorified Redeemer of the Church's creed, who has overcome death, and who, as life-giving Spirit, returns to complete His work in and for His brethren ; to gather together all things in one ; to manifest in human life the power and presence of the living God. The message of good which is to cheer and regenerate mankind must bring, not merely the assurance of divine pity, but the promise of power ; not merely an explanation of life as it now is, but a force tending to make life what it ought to be.

3. The last object of ambition which St. Paul mentions is one indissolubly connected with the thought of life as a probation, and of judgment as the final revelation of its issues in work and character. What usually taints ambition (in the bad sense) is the element of self-seeking and egoistic self-assertion which accompanies it. But the mainspring of all Christian endeavour, whether directed towards personal self-culture or social service, is the consciousness of a filial relationship to God, which makes a

man realise that he is not his own, and that his true life consists in the identification of his entire self with the will and purpose of a heavenly Father. All spiritual advancement therefore tends towards simplicity, towards unity of nature, towards that condition of personality in which every thought and faculty is brought into captivity to a single principle or motive—what St. Paul speaks of as the desire to please God;[1] what might be otherwise described as the unceasing aspiration towards union with God in heart, mind and will. Such is the moral state which Augustine contemplates when he treats the four 'cardinal' virtues as functions or aspects of a single principle; and the same thought underlies the apostolic 'psalm of charity' (1 Cor. xiii.), which depicts a single grace manifesting itself in widely different relationships, and in each reflecting the very mind and heart of Christ. It might, indeed, suffice to recall another characteristic phrase of St. Paul—the phrase *in Christ*, which describes the spiritual *status* of one who entertains no desires, cherishes no hopes, fulfils no duties, apart from Christ. The climax, in short, of all spiritual discipline and all moral effort is a personality wholly at one with itself, moving in obedience to a single impulse, dedicating its activities to the advancement of a single purpose, aspiring perpetually towards one only eternal and immutable good.[2]

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[1] 1 Thess. iv. 1; cp. Rom. viii. 8; 1 Cor. vii. 32; Col. i. 10; 2 Tim. ii. 4.

[2] *de imit. Christi*, i. 3: 'Cui omnia unum sunt, et omnia ad unum trahit, et omnia in uno videt, potest stabilis corde esse et in

To this view of the moral life corresponds the Christian conception of sin. Sin is not merely to be measured by its social consequences, intricate and far-reaching as these are. It has been truly said that the sins of modern life fail to press upon the consciences of men because they are, as a rule, 'long-range' sins. The decorous surface of civilised society covers an amount of anti-social greed, selfishness and callousness, which most people are too ignorant or too thoughtless to take into account. In proportion as the public conscience wakens to the fact that our fearful social disorders are rooted in habits and traditions of life which seem to be, but are not, innocent of wrong, the sense of sin may be expected to revive. But in any case, sin is a fact which must be estimated in the light of the revealed *end* of human nature. The sin which pervades humanity is one of omission; it is non-attention to the claim of God—it is the organisation of life apart from the thought of His will and purpose. Persons are apt to judge their own lives exclusively by the rule of the second table of the decalogue; they tell us that they are unconscious of having 'done any harm to any one.' But the soul stands eternally confronted with the claim of God;[1] and sin is essentially aversion from God, independence of God, the use of God's gifts as if they were our own. On the

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Deo pacificus permanere . . . ; in multis operibus non dissipatur, quia omnia ad Dei honorem operatur.'

[1] Calvin, on 1 Tim. i. 13, says: 'Hinc colligi potest definitio peccati: quod sit directa in Deum contumacia in transgressione prioris tabulae; deinde quod sit malitiosa veritatis reiectio.'

other hand, conversion means the return of the soul to God; recollection of His Fatherhood and of man's sonship; the advance from the bondage of sense to the liberty of the Spirit, from alienation to unity, from multiplicity to singleness.[1] It follows that the sense of sin or shortcoming is a constant and permanent element in Christian character. The general absence of it, which is so marked a feature of modern life, is the result of an utterly defective realisation of the immediate relation in which God stands to the soul. Whatever the nature of man requires for its happiness or perfection, God essentially *is.* He is light and love, truth and grace, holiness and power, and man's 'sense of sin' practically means an abiding consciousness of his need of God and of his unfulfilled capacity for union with God. Sin means the divided mind and will. It is the effort to please two masters, to combine incompatible interests. Only in finding God does the soul attain to its predestined unity; only in the possession of God does it secure the supreme good of which it is capable—the simplicity of a nature which is at one with itself.[2]

'It was a good maxim of Pythagoras',' writes the Cambridge Platonist: '*Δεῖ καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἕνα γένεσθαι, Oportet etiam hominem unum fieri.* A divided mind and a *multiform* life speaks the

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[1] See Dante, *de monarchia*, i. 15, quoted p. 118, note 3; and cp. *de imit. Christi*, i. 21: 'Felix qui abiicere potest omne impedimentum distractionis, et ad unionem se recolligere sanctae compunctionis.'

[2] Dante, *l.c.*: 'Omne quod est bonum, per hoc est bonum, quod in uno consistit.'

greatest disparagement that may be: it is only the intermediation of one last end that can reconcile a man perfectly to himself and his own happiness. This is the best temper and composedness of the soul, *Ὅταν εἰς ἓν καὶ εἰς μίαν ὁμολογίαν ἑνωθῇ*, as Plotinus speaks; when by a conjunction with one chief good and last end it is drawn up into an unity and consent with itself; when all the faculties of the soul, with their several issues and motives, though never so many in themselves, like so many lines, meet together in one and the same centre.'[1]

This is, perhaps, the last and most comprehensive precept of ethics; at least it implies that, in regard to the object towards which they are directed, religion and morals perfectly coincide. The supreme object of faith and knowledge is also the end of all action and desire—the essential Good—the holy and steadfast Will which manifests itself in the phenomena of nature, in history and in the conscience of man. Reflection and aspiration, prayer and action, are only different forms of self-consecration to a single end; different aspects or functions of the personal self lifting up its soul and stretching out its hands unto God.

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[1] J. Smith, *Discourses*, p. 414.

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